Zach: Tayler. Pri. 4.

A PLAINE AND FAMILIAR EXPOSITION OF THE Ninth and Tenth Chapters of the Prouerbs of *Salomon.*

MATTH. 13. 35.

I will open my mouth in Parables, and will vtter the things which haue been kept secret from the foundation of the world.



AT LONDON,
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TO THE RIGHT WORSHIPFVLL, SIR ANTONIE COPE, KNIGHT, GRACE, MERCIE, AND peace be multiplied.

SIr, your louing acceptance of our former treatiſe, together with the good entertainment which it hath found with manie Chriſtian Readers, hath much encouraged vs to dedicate this alſo to your fauourable patronage. We are now more willing to make ſome worke for the Preſſe, becauſe we haue no imploiment in the Pulpit. And who knoweth, but that others (whom God hath graced with farre greater ſufficiencie) may be ſtirred vp hereby, to publiſh ſome of their godly meditations? that as their faithfull labours were formerly like pure fountaines, which did only refreſh their particular congregations: ſo now, by meanes of printing, they may be made like great and comfortable riuers, to water the whole Land.

And whereas we and our families haue plentifullie taſted of your goodnes and mercy, we thought it our bounden duties to manifeſt our vnfained thankfulnes for the ſame; that other Patrons may bee mooued, by

your example, to ſhew the like compaſſion to their diſtreſſed Miniſters, that you haue done to vs and ours. If the ſucceſſe fall out according to our hope, wee purpoſe (by Gods aſſiſtance) to proceede further in this book of the Prouerbs, in the ſame method which is here alreadie begun: if otherwiſe, yet this is our comfort, that it hath been, and is our continual care, and hearts deſire, to keepe a good conſcience, and to recompenſe our preſent ſilence with the beſt ſeruice that we are able to performe vnto the Church. The God of all mercie and comfort, multiplie his gracious bleſſings vpon you more and more; and graunt all peace and proſperitie to all thoſe that faithfully loue and ſeeke the peace of the Church, and the proſperitie of the Goſpell.

Your Worſhips, in all Chriſtian

duties to be commanded,

Iohn Dod, Robert Cleauer.

To the Christian Reader.

THe wisedome of God, who best knoweth euerie mans affections, doth testifie, that such as are full, doe loath an honie combe: but to them that are hungrie, euen bitter things become sweete. That which is verie good, yea precious, and desired of the best, is distasted of such as regard not instruction: but that which is good at all, though meane, and despised of the most, is sauourie to such as soundly seeke saluation. The perswasion whereof hath incouraged vs to bring forth our prouision, and to set before thee such foode as God hath inabled vs to prepare. We rest assured of thy Christian loue towards vs, and prouidence for thine owne soule, that thou wilt bee more affected with the matter of this treatise (being, as wee hope sound, and without corruption) then offended with the manner thereof, being homely, and without elegancie. As in expounding this Scripture to our owne flocks, we respected the capacitie of our vnlearned hearers: so in publishing the same to others, wee tender the profit of the simplest readers. And as for them that are iudicious, and godly learned, we presume that their owne knowledge, and the reading of more excellent discourses, will minister wisdome, to make their vse of this slender worke; as this worke will giue them occasion to esteeme the better of more excellent discourses. Wee haue thought good to chuse these two chapters to begin with, though almost in the middest of the booke, that wee might propose to thee a paterne of the exposition of both sorts of parables, aswell of such as are set downe in forme of a treatise, and continued Prou. 27. 7.

discourse

discourse, as of those which are for the most part single sentences. If thou shalt iudge, that there may be any fruit of these trauels, we are minded, if God will, to explicate the rest; but by parts, and at seuerall times, and not all entirely together. Now in reading of this, obserue that the reasons and vses of the points are not inferred vpon the allegations, or amplifications, immediately going before, but depend vpon the propositions, which are the doctrines raised out of the seuerall verses: And into them are we compelled to enter abruptly without any precedent introduction to leade vs, least we should either wearie our selues in seeking varietie of preambles, or wearie thee with innumerable tautologies and repetitions.

The God of mercie graunt thee that grace which we can but wish thee; and by the efficacie of his Spirit, worke in thine heart the vertue & power of this his holy word, which we can only by tongue and penne declare vnto thee. Amen.

AN EXPOSITION OF THE NINTH CHAPTER OF THE PROVERBS.

CHAPTER IX.

THis Chapter doth containe a briefe recapitulation or ſummary almoſt of all the former eight Chapters: containing, Firſt, the holy inſtructions of wiſdome, in the perſon of a Princeſſe or great Ladie making a banquet. Secondly, the deceiueable and entiſing flatterings of ſinfulneſſe and follie, in the perſon of a ſmooth and guilefull harlot.

Verſ. 1. *Wiſdome hath built her houſe, and hewen out her ſeuen pillars.*

WIſdome, or *wiſedomes*] *viz.* The moſt abſolute and ſoueraigne Wiſdome, the Lord Ieſus Chriſt, who is the perfect wiſdome of his father, *(hath built her houſe)* that is, the Church, which is ſo called, 1. Tim. 3. 15. *(and hewen out her ſeuen pillars)* that is, hath moſt firmely founded, and perpetually ſupporteth it with his owne hand: which is more powerfull for it, than many pillars and buttreſſes are to ſuſtaine a materiall building: whereby alſo is intended that the Churches ſafetie is accompanied with beauty, as hauing pillars hewen out and poliſhed, and not made of rough ſtones without garniſhing.

Doct. 1. All true wisdome is in Gods word.

Wisdome &c.] All true wisedome is contained in the holie word of God. He nameth not power, iustice, truth or mercie, though these be also there in fulnesse, but wisdome in this case taketh the first place, and shineth out in greatest brightnesse: In regard wherof the Apostle with a kind of insultation doth expostulate with worldly men, *Where is the wise? where is the Scribe? hath not God made the wisedome of this world foolishnesse?* that is, whatsoeuer policie or reason doth compare with the wisdome of the Spirit, or is repugnant to it, or not sanctified by it, that the Lord in word reproueth, and in deede confoundeth.

1.Corin.1.

Reasons 1. First, it ouermatcheth and ouerthroweth all the craft of cunning men, and the subtiltie of Satan himselfe: for whatsoeuer plots or practises of mischiefe he hath seemed most to preuaile in, haue alwaies turned to the ruine of his owne kingdome: and albeit he suggest new temptations, and raise vp new errors, and deuise sinnes of new fashions, yet the Scriptures are euermore readily appointed with new arguments to repell them.

2 Secondlie, it is the fountaine, from whence is deriued all sound vnderstanding, without which no man can attaine to true wisedome: it sharpeneth the wit of the most sillie and ignorant, and addeth to the knowledge of the most iudicious and learned.

Chap.1.4.5.

*Vse.*1. Reproofe of them that condemne Gods holy ordinances of follie, and be ashamed of the practise and profession of them: but as for the inuentions of flesh and bloud, the sayings of men, and the painted shewes of humane wit, those they haue in high admiration.

2 Instruction to renounce and put off our owne carnal reason, and to be directed only by the commandements and counsels of God in the Scriptures. For so himselfe requireth, Chap. 3.5.6. saying: *Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and leane not vnto thine owne wisedome. In all thy waies acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy waies.*

3 Consolation against the crafty heads of subtile foxes, which goe about to circumuent poore simple and harmelesse Christi-

ans:

ans: if wee can pray againſt their practiſes, as *Dauid* did, their purpoſes and counſels ſhal be turned into follie as *Achitophels* was.

Built her houſe, &c.] It belongeth onely to Chriſt, both to build and beautifie the Church. Which cauſed *Dauid* though he was King, and ſeemed to haue the whole diſpoſing of the matter in his own hand, yet to intreat the Lord to ſhew mercy to Sion, and to build vp the walles of Ieruſalem: that is, to prouide for the ſafety, increaſe, and good eſtate of the godly. If no man, no not *Salomon* be able by his induſtrie to build an earthly familie, much leſſe can anie erect a Church which is Gods ſpirituall habitation. And to this purpoſe tends al that is here aſcribed to wiſdome, her houſe, her pillars, her victuals, her wine, her table, her maids: that is, Chriſt his ſpirituall houſe, protection, feaſt and meſſengers. For notwithſtanding the miniſters be men and not ſpirits, yet their function is ſpirituall, and not humane.

Doct. 2. Chriſt onelie is the builder and beautifier of the Church Pſalm. 51. 18. Pſalm. 127. 1.

Firſt, he alone hath the diſpoſing of the word, vouchſafing it to ſome and denying it to others, according to his own wil, as he teſtifieth in the Pſalmes: *He ſheweth his word vnto Iacob, his ſtatutes, and his iudgements vnto Iſrael. He hath not dealt ſo with any nation, neither haue they knowne his iudgements.* Secondly, no man nor meanes can be ſufficient to make ſufficient miniſters, vnleſſe he both furniſh & ſend them forth. For (ſaith the Scripture) *How ſhall they preach vnleſſe they be ſent?* Rom. 10. 15. Thirdly, his Spirit conuerteth mens ſoules, & begetteth them to euerlaſting life, and ſo they become ſtones of this building. For were not the Word made mightie and effectuall by him, Satan would keepe his hold againſt the preachers, and proud hearts would neuer be brought into ſubiection. For as the Apoſtle ſaith: *The weapons of our warfare are not carnall, but mightie through God, to caſt downe ſtrong holds*: 2. Cor. 10. 4.

Reaſon 1. God giues his word where he will. Pſalm. 147. 19. 20.

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So far as we wiſh wel to the Church, let vs by prayers to God procure ỹ welfare therof. Wherunto the Prophet admoniſheth al godly men, ſaying, *Pray for the peace of Ieruſalem: let thẽ proſper that loue thee.* And this was practiſed by *Daniel*, *Nehemiah* and

Vſe 1. Pſalm. 22. 16.

and others, notwithſtanding the great account they were in with their Princes.

2 Reproofe of Papiſts and others that reſiſt God in his work, attempting to plucke downe that which he hath ſet vp: as to hinder the increaſe of Chriſtians, to ſtop the paſſage of the Goſpell, and as much as in them is, to reſtraine the courſe of al Chriſtianitie: who as they walke in the ſteps of their brother *Elymas*, ſo may they looke for the like ſucceſſe with him, Act.13.10.

3 Conſolation, that the caſe of the Church were not deſperate, though it ſhould come to paſſe, that men either durſt not, or would not, or could not promote religion, or protect ſuch as profeſſe it: for Chriſt will not faile of his faithfulneſſe, as hee is no way diſappointed of his helpe. For his ſufficiencie is in himſelfe, and the worke belongeth to himſelfe, and hee will neuer deſiſt from it, vntill it be accompliſhed.

Iſai. 59.16.

Doct. 3. Chriſtians only are in ſafetie. Pſal.1.4.

Seuen pillars.] The beſt way for good ſafetie is to become a faithfull Chriſtian. Of ſuch the Prophet ſpeaketh, Pſal.125.1. *They that truſt in the Lord, ſhall be as mount Zion, which cannot be remooued.* Wicked men be like to chaffe or duſt that hath no ſtabilitie, but is eaſily driuen by the winde into puddles and all other filthie places, without any reſiſtance: but it is as eaſie to ouerturne a great mountaine, as to ouerthrow the hope and good eſtate of the godlie.

Reaſon 1. Firſt, his tender care is continually watchfull for their ſafety, as the eie and wings of the henne are alwaies ready to ſuccour her young ones, Pſalm.91.5. and neerer are they to him, than the chickens to their damme; as being members of his owne bodie, and the very apple of his eie: Zach.2.8.

2 Secondly, his power is alwaies exerciſed for their preſeruation: which was figured by the two braſen pillars in the Temple, the one called *Iachin*, that is, the Lord will eſtabliſh, and the other *Boaz*, that is, in him is ſtrength: both theſe conioyned doe make the ſafetie of his ſeruants complete. If he had power, and not applied it for our helpe, our caſe were nothing the better: if he ſhould ſet himſelf to vphold vs and faile of power,

1.Kings.7.21.

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we could not ſtand, and therefore they were aſſured by theſe ſignes both of the one and the other.

Thirdly, it concerneth him in equitie, to ſtand for his owne people, that haue caſt themſelues vpon him, and labour in his ſeruice; eſpeciallie he giuing warrantize for their ſafety, vndertaking that his *truth ſhal be his ſhield and buckler*: Pſal. 91.4. 3

Obiect. But they are wronged and ſpoiled, and ſometimes alſo killed.

Anſw. Gods prouidence doth not free vs from troubles, but preſerue vs in them: for then it is moſt ſeaſonable. Wiſdome did foreſee that there would be aſſaults: elſe why did ſhe make her caſtle ſo ſtrong? But this is the happie eſtate of Chriſtians, that though they bee perſecuted, yet they bee not forſaken: and though they bee ſlaine, yet not ouercome; becauſe the loue of God remaineth with them, and a bleſſed reward is prepared for them.

Reproofe of fearefull perſons which haue no courage for the truth, that dare not ſhew themſelues in any good cauſe, which may procure diſpleaſure, nor exerciſe thoſe ſeruices which are neceſſarie for their ſaluation. *Vſe.*1.

Secondly, terror for perſecutors and ſuch as oppoſe themſelues againſt godly Chriſtians: they ſet themſelues to beate downe Gods houſe vpon his head, to hew out the ſtones, and dig downe the walles; to plucke downe the timber from off the roofe: and they imagine that there is neither difficultie nor danger in this attempt, but that they may eaſilie and with impunitie effect their purpoſe. But howſoeuer they eſteeme it a cottage that ſtandeth on rotten props, they ſhall finde it a caſtle that ſtandeth on mightie pillars: and if it ſtand, they ſhall fall. And looke how much ſafetie is to the houſe, and them that be in it; ſo much perill is to the enemies and them that aſſault it: for hee is not onelie a wall of defence round about his people, but a wall of fire to conſume their enemies: Zach. 2.5. 2

Thirdly, conſolation: though the enemies of the Church be neuer ſo many or mighty, yet doth it ſtand ſtill impregnable and inuincible: *the gates of hell*, that is, the power of all the Diuels Matth. 16.18. 3

Diuels ſhall not preuaile againſt it. And ſuch is the ſafetie of euery particular Chriſtian, both for ſoule and body. For if one ſtone could be caſt downe, the whole building might bee demoliſhed.

Verſ. 2. *Se hath killed her victuals, mingled her wine, and prepared her table.*

Doct. 1. MEntion was made before of wiſdomes houſe, and the ſtrength of it; and here of her hoſpitality and houſekeeping in it; where heauenly things are repreſented by earthlie, and the bountie and magnificence of the Lord, by the plentifull prouiſion of a liberall feaſt-maker. For the graces of his Spirit, by the miniſterie of the word, are compared to daintie meates; and delicious wines, either ſpiced, or mingled with choice kinds of coole waters, whereby in thoſe hot countries they were much refreſhed. Whereunto is added the circumſtance of readineſſe; that there needeth no tariance or long waiting, but all things are in order, and commodiouſly prepared for the preſent refection of the gueſts.

The ſoules foode is the beſt fare.

Killed her victuals, &c.] The beſt cheere is that which is made for the ſoule in Gods houſe: which is declared by diuers circumſtances in the parable of the great feaſt, Mat. 22. 2. 3. As, that it was made by a King; and therefore not common, but coſtly according to his royall ſtate and greatneſſe: and was alſo a wedding feaſt; which is vſually great and full of ſolemnity: and made at the mariage of his owne ſonne; which conſequently would cauſe it to be much more ſumptuous and magnificent, then if it had been for a ſeruant or kinſman, or ordinarie perſon. By all which is meant the Goſpell, wherein euerie faithfull man is feaſted, and made Gods ſonne, and maried to Chriſt himſelfe.

Reaſ. 1. One reaſon to proue this doctrine, is the reſemblance and agreement that is betweene the ſpirituall food and corporall meates: that is delightful to ſ̄ ſoule as they be to the ſenſe: that reuiueth the afflicted and troubled conſcience, as they refreſh the ſpirits of a faint and feeble perſon; and addeth increaſe

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of ſtrength and ſtature to the inward man, as they doe to the outward.

Another reaſon is the differences that are betweene them, wherein this heauenly and celeſtial banquet doth far ſurmount the earthly. Firſt, this onely is perpetual, day and night, thorow the whole yeere, and whole life, and at death and euermore; whereas all other are but for a few daies, and commonlie not for many houres. Secondlie, here is no ſurfet or danger by exceſſe, though we continue eating and drinking inceſſantlie without intermiſſion; which is contrary in corporall repaſts. Thirdly, that is a durable meate, and doth miniſter an abiding nouriture, that hee that hath once digeſted it, ſhall neuer after periſh by hunger. Fourthlie, this doth not onely ſuſtaine life for a time, but giue it, and preſerue it for euer. Fiftlie, whereas all other meates, and drinkes, though neuer ſo plentiful, are onely for the bellie, and helpe againſt nothing but the preſent hunger and thirſt; this bringeth with it ſafetie, wealth, dignitie, and all happineſſe. Sixtly and laſtly, here is open houſe kept continuallie for all commers, nations, ages, and ſtates, without any diſparagement to the greateſt, or contempt of the meaneſt: none is excluded that is willing to be admitted: none is vpbraided for comming too often: the more they frequent the houſe, the more they ſhall be made of, and the better welcome. 2

Confutation of ſuch as ſtand vpon the merit of man for ſaluation: all the grace we partake of, is beſtowed vpon vs at *Wiſdomes* royall feaſt, and that is frank and free, and from his owne goodneſſe. Great perſonages, eſpeciallie Princes, vſe not to take a ſhot when they haue giuen entertainement. *Vſe* 1.

Inſtruction, that we come to the word and Sacraments and al the holy ordinances of God, as an hungrie man to a good feaſt, with a willing mind, a large deſire, a good appetite, and a certaine expectation to be ſatisfied. 2 Iſai 55.1.

Conſolation for poore Chriſtians, that finde ſuch plentie of ſpirituall prouiſion in Gods houſe, though they feele penurie of earthly things in their owne. For the fruition of the greater doth counteruaile the want of the leſſe; and the comforta- 3

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ble refreshings of the soule, will make men more patiently to endure the distresses of the bodie: whereof *Dauid* had experience in his troubles. For his soule thirsting after God (notwithstanding hee was in a barren and drie wilderneſſe without water) was yet satisfied as with marrow and fatneſſe: Pſalm. 63.15.

Doct. 2. *Mingled her wine, &c.*] It is not the wit of man, but the wisdome of God that doth make the ministery of the word comfortable. This doth hee assume to himselfe in a peculiar manner, saying: *I create the fruit of the lippes to be peace.* It is as proper to him to giue peace by the preaching of the word, as to giue being and forme to a creature; or to take away the corruption and punishment of sinne. Elſe what need had *Dauid* to call vpon him to make him heare of ioy and gladneſſe? If it had been in mans power, he might haue commanded it at his subiects hands; and the Priests and Prophets would haue thought it a preferment to be admitted to that seruice: but he knew it was no more possible for the best qualified of them to remooue his sorrow without Gods blessing, then for a surgeon to cure a wound with his white hand, without a plaister.

Isai. 57.19. Gods wisdome, not mans wit, makes the word comfortable. Pſal. 51.8.

Reaſons 1. First, ioy is a fruit of the spirit: Gal. 5.22. Secondly, to giue true comfort is to *speake to the heart, and to assure it of the pardon of all iniquitie*: Isai. 40.1. True it is that men may be the instruments of both these, but the authors of neither.

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3 Thirdly, it is seene by wonted experience, that they which haue the finest wits, the greatest art, and sweetest tongues (not guided by the counsel of God) are lesse profitable in their Ministrie than men of meaner parts, bringing only the power of the word and spirit in their doctrine, as the fruitlesse teaching of the false Prophets declareth, Ier. 23.31.32. Whom *Ieremie* complaineth of and threatneth in the name of the Lord, saying: *I will come against the false Prophets, which haue sweete tongues: whom I sent not, nor commanded, and therefore they bring no profit to this people.*

Vſe 1. Reproſe of such Ministers, as iudge it a base thing to content themselues with the plaine simplicitie of Scriptures, but pow-

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der their doctrine with the duſt of mens deuiſes, and authorities. Secondly, of ſuch hearers as depend vpon the perſons of the preachers, eſteeming ſo farre of the ſermon, as the miniſter is graced with outward ornaments; and according to that rule they meaſure all the doctrine that is deliuered: and ſo many times they thinke good wine to bee harſh, becauſe it is brought in a pewter flagon, and vineger very pleaſant, becauſe it is brought in a ſiluer goblet.

Terror to them that diſtaſte all kind of ſincere teaching: the more Chriſt dealeth with it, the more they loath it, nothing is ſo offenſiue vnto them as the mixture he maketh: they more abhorre it then gall and wormewood. 2

Prepared her table. Gods fauour and grace is alwaies ready to be found when it is faithfully ſought. Our faith can neuer take him tardy in deſiring that at the preſent which he cannot giue till hereafter, or in being before hand to demand that which his ability is behind hand to performe. The meſſengers ſay not in the Goſpell, Be there at ſuch a time, and in the meane while, things ſhall be prepared, or Go with me now, and dinner will be readie anon; but Come, for all things are now readie. *Doct.* 3. They that faithfully ſeeke Gods fauour, doe ſurely find it. Luk. 14. 17.

The firſt cauſe is in reſpect of God himſelf, whoſe prouident care hath foreſeene what things would be expedient, and his power ſo ſufficient to ſupply al wants, that there cannot be the leaſt defect for any one moment. Secondlie, in reſpect of his Church and children, whoſe ſtate doth as much require continuall grace, as the light of a lampe hath neede of oile to maintaine it. *Reaſons* 1. 2

Confutation of their impious error, that thinke the word and Sacraments containe only emptie ſhewes of happines long to come in another world, and nothing preſent, but drie and withered promiſes. What is this, but to charge God to be a deceiuer, and being void of al mercy & fidelity, to ſtarue his people? We would deem him a miſerable maſter, or houſeholder, that hauing corne & ſtore of prouiſion in preſent, ſhould yet keepe his family faſting, and feede them only with a bare hope of haruеſt to come. The Scripture teacheth it not to be agreeable to mercie to put off our needie neighbour till to morrow, *Vſe* 1. Chap. 3. 28.

when we haue wherewith to relieue him to day: and certaine it is, that the Lord doth not require more iuſtice and compaſſion of his creatures, then himſelfe wil ſhew his owne children. But thoſe men finde the caſe to be ſo: they ſpeake by experience, they neuer got any good by comming to ſuch exerciſes. It is like to be true: but why? they came not as friends, but as ſpies, and ſpies will be eſpied out, and turned away emptie. The comforts of the word and ſpirit be prepared for them that loue God: 1.Cor.2.9.

2 Inſtruction, that if we at any time faile of good ſucceſſe in the ſeruices of God, that we impute it to our ſelues, and not lay the blame vpon his ordinances: they were not barren of vertue and power, but wee were wanting in faith or repentance, or in performance of ſome ſuch duties, whereby wee ſhould haue been better prepared.

3 Conſolation, that if we feele want of any grace, or of power againſt any ſinne, it is neuer out of ſeaſon to ſeeke ſupplie, we ſhall be ſure to preuaile whenſoeuer we faithfully labour for it, and that as God hath grace alwaies readie for vs in this life, ſo is his glorie and bleſſedneſſe from euerlaſting prepared for vs in the life to come. And to the poſſeſſion thereof our Sauiour will ſolemnlie call vs at the laſt day, ſaying, *Come ye bleſſed of my Father: inherit ye the Kingdome prepared for you from the foundations the world.*

Matth.25.34.

Verſ.3. *Shee hath ſent forth her Maides, and crieth vpon the higheſt places of the citie.*

IN the former words was ſhewed what perparation wiſdom made for her feaſt at home, and in theſe what courſe ſhee taketh to inuite the gueſts abroad. Her maides are ſent forth as meſſengers into the ſtreetes, and gates and market place, which commonly are frequented with greateſt multitude & concourſe of people, to call as many as they can meete with: not that maides or matrons or any women are allowed to be miniſters: but he proſecuteth the allegory, euery part of it correſpondent and ſutable to other. As Chriſt himſelfe, vnderſtood by

by wiſdome, is compared to a Ladie: ſo his Prophets, Apoſtles, Paſtors, and Teachers, are reſembled to maides, which in regard of ſex are moſt meete towaite vpon women.

God in his wiſdom hath appointed that they ẏ wil come to ſaluation, muſt be brought to it by the miniſtry of his meſſengers. So the Apoſtle teacheth, that *all things are of God, which hath reconciled vs vnto himſelfe by Ieſus Chriſt, and hath giuen to vs* (ſaith he) *the miniſtry of reconciliation:* the father of his owne goodneſſe hath vouchſafed to be at one with vs: he hath appointed his Son to make the peace, and his Word to declare the performance of it by the Sonne, and his Miniſters to publiſh it by warrant of his Word.

Doct. 2. The miniſtery of the word the meanes of ſaluation by Gods ordinance. 2. Cor. 5. 8.

Firſt Chriſt hath ſubſtituted them to bee his deputies, and ſtill doth ſpeake to his people by them. Saint *Paul* doth boldly profeſſe for the iuſtifying of his miniſtry, aſſuring the Corinthians that God was in Chriſt, and reconciled the world to himſelfe, not imputing their ſinnes vnto them, and hath committed to vs, ſaith hee, the word of reconciliation. Now then are we Embaſſadors for Chriſt: as though God did beſeech you through vs, we pray you in Chriſt his ſtead, that ye be reconciled to God.

Reaſon 1. 2. Cor. 5. 19 29

Secondlie, our neceſſitie is ſuch as doth require the helpe of their miniſtrie: for we haue no inclination of our ſelues to come to this feaſt, vnleſſe we be ſent for: many are readie to preſſe to corporall banquets, where they haue neither calling nor countenance, but be many times repelled that they cannot get in, or extruded and turned out at the doores before they be ſatisfied: but to this commeth none without bidding, nor vſually without much vrging.

Thirdly, the Lord doth ſo highly eſteeme of their ſeruice, and ſo farre obſerue them that reiect their counſels and holy inſtructions, that they that will not be directed to euerlaſting life by them, ſhall neuer attaine vnto it without them. 2

For they that were inuited to the feaſt, and refuſed to come when the meſſengers called them, were threatned by the Lord himſelfe, *that they ſhould neuer taſte of his ſupper:* Luk. 14. 24.

Inſtruction to be teachable and tractable to their perſwaſi-

ons,ſo farre as they bring their meſſage from their maſter, and cal vs from the poiſon of our own ſinfulnes,to the wholeſome foode of wiſedomes feaſt. *Who is among you*, ſaith *Iſaias*, *that feareth the Lord? let him heare the voyce of his ſeruant: he that walketh in darkeneſſe,and hath no light,let him truſt in the name of the Lord,and ſtay vpon his God.*

2 Reproofe of ſuch as account them vnneceſſarie and vnprofitable, and thruſt vpon the people as a trouble, burthen, and charge vnto them: who many times both deſpiſe their doctrine,and perſecute their perſons:Matth.22.6.

3 Conſolation for ſuch as haue them in ſingular loue for their worke ſake, dealing kindlie with the miniſters and taking the benefit of their miniſtery: the kindneſſe they ſhew is accepted, as done to Chriſt, and the promiſes they receiue bee as ſolide and ſure,as if they were deliuered by Chriſt.

Doct. 2. Chriſt would haue the Goſpell openly taught,that al might be inſtructed.

Chriſt Ieſus hath appointed the preaching of the Goſpell to be moſt publike,that al might be inſtructed by it. This moued the Apoſtle to be ſo induſtrious in his function, and deſirous euery where to preach, both to the Iewes and Gentiles.It was his bounden dutie ſo to doe:he did owe them that ſeruice: the Lord bequeathed vnto them the miniſtrie of ſaluation, and made him an executor of his will,and therefore he was in their debt, vntill he had diſcharged it.

Rom.1.13.14.

Reaſ. 1. Firſt, all the doctrine of God is perfectly true,and will hold out at the triall:the more it commeth into the light to be looked vpon, the more it will be iuſtified,to the glorie of the Author, the clearing of the miniſters,and ſaluation of the faithfull hearers.

2 Secondly,his goodneſſe is ſuch *that he would haue no man to periſh, but would all men to come to repentance:* 2.Pet.3.9.

3 Thirdly he hath ordained it to be neceſſary and effectual for the ſaluation of all ſorts of people. And therefore it is called *the grace of God, that bringeth ſaluation to all men:* Tit.2.11.

4 Fourthly, it is for the rebuke of ſinfull men: *Crie aloud*,ſaith the Lord to the Prophet, *Spare not: lift vp thy voice like a trumpet,and ſhew my people their tranſgreſſion,and to the houſe of Iacob their ſinnes.* So likewiſe it is for the comfort of godly men.For whoſe

whoſe ſake the Lord calleth vpon faithful miniſters, ſaying: *O thou that bringeſt good tidings to Sion, get thee vp into the high mountaine: O thou that bringeſt good tidings to Ieruſalem, lift vp thy voice with ſtrength: lift vp, be not afraid: ſay vnto the cities of Iuda, behold your God.* And finally ſerueth for the edification of all men. Rom. 16. 26.

Reproofe of Ieſuites, Seminaries, and Browniſts, which delight to creepe into corners. Secondly, of ignorant and inſufficient miniſters, which neuer dwelt in wiſedomes familie, nor receiued any meſſage from her, and therefore are vtterlie vnable to declare her mind. *Vſe* 1.

Verſ. 4. *Who ſo is ſimple let him come hither, and to him that is deſtitute of wiſedome ſhe ſpeaketh.*

HEre is a deſcription of the gueſts that bee meete for this feaſt, which in ſhew ſeeme moſt vnmeet, as being moſt vnlike the miſtreſſe of the feaſt: and theſe are ſimple perſons, deſtitute of ſpirituall vnderſtanding, yet ſo as they feele the want of knowledge, and the weight of their ignorance, and leane no longer on worldly wiſedome.

Who ſo.] Ignorance is not a cauſe that ſhould ſtay men from hearing the word of God, but rather incite them to it. *Doct.* The more ignorant we are, the more neede we haue of inſtruction.

Firſt, their neceſſitie doth require it: for who hath more need of eie-ſalue, then they whoſe eies are ſore? And who haue more neede of guides, then they who haue loſt their ſight and are become blind? And eſpecially when the way is difficult and full of danger.

Secondly, the vertue & efficacie that is in the word ſhould allure them vnto it: for it is ſufficient to illuminate and giue light to all that ſeeke it, according to the teſtimonie that the Scripture giueth of it: *The ſtatutes of the Lord are right, and reioyce the heart: the commandement of the Lord is pure, and giueth light to the eies.* Pſalm 19. 8.

Inſtruction for the miniſters of Chriſt ſo to deliuer the doctrine as it may be moſt plaine and perſpicuous to the ſimple people, after the exãple of the Apoſtle: *I had* (ſaith he) *rather in* 1. Cor. 14. 19. *Vſe* 1.

the Church to ſpeake fiue words with mine vnderſtanding, that I might alſo inſtruct others, then ten thouſand words in a ſtrange tongue. The good effect whereof he ſheweth in this, *that if there come in one that beleeueth not, or is vnlearned, he is rebuked, and iudged. And ſo the thoughts of his heart are made manifeſt, and ſo he will fall downe on his face and worſhip God; and ſay plainelie that God is in you indeede:* 1.Cor.14.19.24.

2 Reproofe of ſuch as affect obſcuritie, that the vulgar ſort ſhould not vnderſtand them, taking it to bee for the glorie of their learning to mount aboue the capacitie of their hearers.

3 Conſolation for poore vnlearned men when they come to the Church of God: let them not be diſcouraged if their appetite ſerue them. They are bidden gueſts, and Chriſt hath prepared meate for them, and it doth his hart good too ſee them eate it. That is, he is well pleaſed, and doth reioyce that God doth beſtow his graces vpon them. For ſo the Euangeliſt witneſſeth, that *Ieſus reioyced in the ſpirit, and ſaid, I confeſſe vnto thee Father, Lord of heauen and earth, that thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and learned, and haſt reuealed them to babes: euen ſo. O Father, becauſe it pleaſed thee:* Luke.10.21.

4 Fourthly for the confutation, firſt, of the popiſh ſeruice in a ſtrange language, wherein the ſimple people be ſo far from receiuing anie comfort by the matter that is vttered, as that they vnderſtand not the verie words that are ſpoken, and therfore God neuer ordained it for the vſe of his Church. Whereupon alſo followeth, that thoſe prieſt be none of Wiſdomes attendants, being neither fit to be meſſengers abroad to call the gueſts, nor to be officers at home to giue them entertainement. Secondly, of ſuch as make ignorance their apologie for perſiſtance in ignorance. It is, ſay they, for ſchollers, and men of iudgement to heare ſermons, and not for the vnlearned. Here is that excuſe taken away, and ſo hath this text hitherto met with many other ſhifts and euaſions which men haue deuiſed to exempt their necks from Chriſt his yoke. Firſt ſay they, this preaching and other exerciſes of religion be fooliſh and ridiculous: but *Wiſedome* is the author thereof. Secondly, they be dangerous to deale with: but *ſhe hath hewen out ſeuen pillars.*

pillars. Thirdlie, they bee tedious, and vnpleaſant: but ſhee hath made a banquet. Fourthly, we can learne as much by reading good bookes, as the beſt Preacher can teach vs: *but ſhe hath ſent forth her maides.* Fiftly, ſermons are hard to come by, where ſhould we haue them? *She crieth vpon the high places.* Sixtly, we are ſimple men and want vnderſtanding: but ſhee ſaith: *Who ſo is ſimple let him come hither, and he that is deſtitute of vnderſtanding* &c.

Verſ.5. *Come and eate, and drinke of the wine that I haue mixed.*

THe exhortation which wiſedome vttered by her maides is againe repeated, to expreſſe the ſerious deſire and true meaning of the meſſengers, and miſtris in calling of the gueſts; and to let them know alſo that as they are bidden by way of inuitation, ſo they are commanded by way of ſummons, and therefore to addreſſe themſelues thereunto with al expedition. And becauſe it is not their preſence onely that is required, but a profitable vſe-making of the vndeſerued fauour that is ſhewed vnto them, therefore they are before hand informed to what end they are ſent for; to eate and drinke of the delicates prepared: which is to receiue the merits and graces of Chriſt, with the promiſes of God, and to make them their owne by faith, and particular application.

It concerneth vs duely to imbrace the mercies of God when hee doth offer them vnto vs. It is his good pleaſure that wee ſhould enioy them: otherwiſe they ſhould neuer haue been prouided. So by the Prophet he proclaimeth, Iſa.55.1. *Ho euery one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters: & ye that haue no ſiluer, come, buy, and eate,* &c. There is no victaller ſo deſirous of gueſts for his owne gaine, as Chriſt is of our companie for our ſaluation, he would haue vtterance of his heauenly foode that it ſtand not vpon his hand, and therefore calleth vpon all that feele thēſelues in want, to come take their part with him. And becauſe they be needy and vnable to diſcharge the reckoning, he is content to be paid with a good ſtomacke to fall to, hee would haue thē worke it out at eating and drinking, that is, he doth.

Doct. When God offers inſtruction, we ought to receiue it.

doth beſtow it vpon them of his owne free fauour without all deſert of their part.

Reaſon 1. Firſt, God neuer offereth any thing vnto vs, which is not
2 meete and expedient for vs. Secondlie, it is a grieuous ingratitude, to reiect the kindnes of God: Luk. 14. Which the prophet doth aggrauate againſt vnfaithfull *Ahaz* who refuſed his comfortable meſſage: *Heare now* ſaith he, *O houſe of Dauid: Is it a ſmall thing for you to grieue men, that ye wil alſo grieue my God?*
3 Iſa. 7. 13. Thirdly, not to receiue the gifts which the Lord doth proffer vnto vs, is to deſpiſe them. As is expreſſely ſhewed in the firſt Chapter, verſ. 24. 25. *I haue called, and ye refuſed; I haue ſtretched out mine hand, and none would regard: But ye haue deſpiſed all my counſell, and would none of my correction.* For ſo hee threatneth, that though *they call vpon him, he will not anſwere: though they ſeeke him earely, they ſhall not find him:* Prou. 1. 28.
4 Fourthlie, benefits not accepted draw iudgements after them that cannot be auoided, Chap. 1. 27.

Vſe 1. Admonition to make vſe of the miniſterie of the word, not ſparing this holy meate, before the table be taken vp: for howſoeuer for corporall foode, though we loſe the opportunitie at one time, we may find it at another: though at one place we eate nothing, yet at another we may haue plentie: though no man would feaſt vs abroad, wee may prouide for our ſelues at home: yet the caſe ſtandeth not ſo concerning this ſpirituall meate; neither our ſelues, nor any other beſide Chriſt, can any where, at any time ſuſtaine our ſoules: and being not fed by him we periſh for euer, as Chriſt ſaith, Ioh. 6. 53.

2 Reproofe of Recuſants and Browniſts, that will not repaire with the congregation of Gods people to the place whither Chriſt calleth them. Secondly, of ſuch as being preſent are yet without all fruit of Gods ordinances; they neither eate, nor drinke of the ſpirituall graces, but onely ſee the dreſſing of the meate, and the diſhes ſet before others.

3 Conſolation to them whoſe hearts doe feele the comfort of theſe graces, they be their owne by a principall property, as a man hath a peculiar right in his foode, whereof no man is partaker with him, but is made his owne by the ſureſt poſſeſſion, being

being turned into nouriture; and made not only his, but a part of him; and Chriſt is made more certainely, and properlie, and conſtantly ours, then the food that is conuerted into our owne ſubſtance: for it will abate againe and be conſumed, but he remaineth our owne for euer.

Verſ.6. *Forſake the fooliſh, and liue yee, and walke in the way of wiſdome.*

NOw ſhe giueth rules of direction to them that were called, the better to fit them for her family: as firſt for their company, that ſince they are to haue ſociety with the Saints in the Church, they are to ſeparate themſelues from the ſinners of the World. Whereunto ſhee perſwadeth them by the good effect enſuing, that the gaine of euerlaſting life wil counteruaile and ouerpoiſe the loſſe of all worldly and fleſhly friends.

The other is for conuerſation, that for as much as they are to dwell with wiſedome (for all the gueſts are domeſticall and of the houſehold) that therefore all their waies and behauiour be holy and agreeable to wiſedome.

When we begin to cleaue to God and good men, wee muſt forthwith breake off al league with wicked men. It was one of the firſt points of counſel that *Peter* gaue to the three thouſand whom he then preſently conuerted, and that which *with many words hee did exhort them vnto, that they would ſaue themſelues from that froward generation.* If they would haue God to ſaue them from damnation, they muſt ſaue themſelues from the fellowſhip of damnable men: Act.2.40. *Doct.* If we will bee good men, we muſt forſake ill companie.

Firſt, in regard of the caſe wherein they ſtand, as appeareth by the conſequence of this text, that ſuch as be at vnion with dead men, be in ſtate of death, and therfore ſaith he, *leaue them, and liue.* Secondlie, in reſpect of behauiour, as the coherence importeth: *Forſake the fooliſh, and ſo walke in the way of wiſdome*; for ſooner they cannot, being corrupted with examples, companie, counſels, and all peſtilent and contagious courſes: and therefore ſaith the Prophet; *Away from me ye wicked, for I will keepe the commandements of my God.* Pſalm. 119. 115. *Reaſon* 1. 2

Thirdly, it bringeth them that vſe ſuch haunts, into ſuſpition with Chriſtians, whereby they bee depriued of that communion, which they might haue with them.

Vſe 1. A defence of them that ſhew their obedience therein, ceaſing to aſſociate themſelues with vngodly companions. It is not their ſingularity, and purity, that they would ſeeme better then other men: it is not their proud ſpirits diſdaining their neighbors, and thinking that no company is good enough for them: It is not becauſe they are new fangled, and ſo forſake their old friends, and caſt off al good fellowſhip: but it is the commandement of God that doth require it, & their duty to performe it.

2 Inſtruction to ſuch as deſire good men to be ſociable with them, let them bee alſo good men, that their ſocietie may bee good and warrantable, for ſo Chriſtians may ſafely and will chearefully adioyne themſelues vnto them. Otherwiſe there
2. Cor. 6. 16. neither is, nor muſt be, nor can bee any good agreement betweene light and darkeneſſe, righteouſneſſe and vnrighteouſnes, God in the one, and Belial in the other.

3 Reproofe of them that can indifferently brooke all companies, and conuerſe with all manner of perſons: If they be ruffians, blaſphemers, and drunkards, they can play the good fellowes with them. If they be Chriſtians and ſuch as feare God, they can diſcourſe of points of religion, they can giue teſtimonie of godly preachers, they can relate what excellent ſermons they haue been at. Certaine it is, that they doe but counterfeit on the one ſide. Then is their behauiour natural when they conuerſe with the worſt; and meerely artificiall, when they come among the beſt.

The other two clauſes of this verſe are reſerued to be handled in fit place.

Verſ. 7. *He that rebuketh a ſcorner, purchaſeth to himſelfe ſhame: he that rebuketh the wicked getteth himſelfe a blot.*

HItherto hath been ſhewed how the meſſage of ſaluation was ſent by Chriſt, & brought by his Miniſters: now here is declared how it is receiued of the people. And firſt, hee bringeth.

bringeth ſuch as be vncapable of it, namelie, deſperate wicked men, being altogether incurable, whom the Scripture tearmeth ſcorners. And theſe will attempt to blemiſh and ſhame all thoſe that ſhall admoniſh them. As charging them ſometimes with arrogancie, malice, indiſcretion and hypocriſie: ſometimes with ſchiſme, ſedition, couetouſneſſe and other miſdemeanors: and if theſe imputations can take no hold on thē, as grounded on no probabilitie, then they fall vpon their meane eſtate, and parentage, and education: for ſo they dealt with the Lord Ieſus Chriſt himſelfe: Mat.13.35. *Is not this the Carpenters Son? is not his mother called Marie?*

The moſt faithfull Miniſters be commonly expoſed to greateſt reproches. If they begin to diſgrace ſin iuſtly, ſinfull men will not ſpare to depraue them vniuſtly. And for this purpoſe whatſoeuer commeth to hand will ſerue their turne. If they can prooue no euill by them, it is enough to traduce them for tōo much goodneſſe. So was *Iohn* accuſed to be a diuelliſh wretch, for being, as they made it, too preciſe and pure in mortification: and Chriſt on the other ſide condemned of intemperancie, for inioying a more free libertie in the holie vſe of the creatures. *Doct.* 1. The beſt men moſt defamed. Mat.11.18.19.

Firſt, hereby they vſe a policie to ſhift for themſelues, ſtriuing to fence their hearts from feare, and their names from infamy. For if they could perſwade their owne ſoules, that theſe ſharpe cenſurers were as bad as other men, they think it would ward off the ſtroke of their rebukes: if they could make others beleeue that all their accuſations were but calumniations, it would free them from ignominie and diſcredit. *Reaſ.*1.

Secondlie, they ſeeke to reuenge themſelues in this, by drawing their admonitors into contempt and danger. They purpoſely take the way not only to quench the loue and good liking which the people bare to thē, but to kindle the diſpleaſure of the Magiſtrate againſt them. As is to be ſeene in the practiſe of *Amaziah* cōplaining to King *Ieroboam* of the Prophet: *Amos hath conſpired againſt thee in the midſt of the houſe of Iſrael: the land is not able to beare all his words.* And ſo *Iſaiah*, cenſuring this crueltie, ſaith, *that they made a man to ſinne in* 2. Amos 7.10.

Word: that is, by wreſting and peruerting mens words, they made that to be ſinne, which was well and iuſtly ſpoken, *and tooke him in a ſnare, which reproued them in the gate, and made the iuſt to fall without cauſe:* Iſai.29.21.

Vſe 1. Inſtruction, not to deale like ſcorners, in ſeeking to blemiſh them that would wipe out our blemiſhes. If they haue faults to be reprooued, let vs ſhew our loue at ſome other time, and not our ſpleene at this time: it is no good way of clearing, to pleade guiltleſſe by recrimination.

2 Secondly, that Miniſters and ſuch as are to admoniſh, be not ſhielded only with patience, but with innocencie, and vpright behauiour. For if wicked men be growne to that impudency, as to giue aſſault to the names of harmeleſſe perſons, (their obtrectations recoiling vpon themſelues, to their owne ſhame) how would they inſult ouer vs, if they had iuſt aduantage againſt vs?

3 Thirdly, not to be credulous to the clamorous reports of vngodlie men, which raiſe vp rumours againſt Chriſtians. You ſhall finde the greateſt offenders, to bee the moſt grieuous accuſers: they would couer their faults by bearing the world in hand that ſuch as vſe to find fault with them, bee moſt faultie.

Verſ.8. *Rebuke not a ſcorner, leſt he hate thee:* &c.

IN the former verſe was ſhewed how ſcorners vſe to deale with them that rebuke them: and here the holy Ghoſt teacheth how we muſt deale with ſcorners: namely, ſithence we ſhall needleſſely ſtirre vp hatred againſt our ſelues, and performe no good to them, that therefore we deſiſt from them, and let them alone. Wherein notwithſtanding good diſcretion is to be vſed, that none which may be corrigible be reiected for a ſcorner, but ſuch as vpon ſufficient triall haue declared themſelues by a continued obſtinacie to be ſo. And in this caſe alſo though priuat reproſes are to be ſpared, yet muſt they publikely bee purſued by the miniſtrie, and cenſured by the Church, and puniſhed by the Magiſtrate.

The

The benefit of Chriſtian counſell is not to be offered to an obſtinate ſinner. So doth the holie Ghoſt teach in another place of this booke: Chap.23.9. *Speake not in the eares of a foole: for he will deſpiſe the wiſedome of thy words.* He would not haue the gratious ſpeeches of godly Chriſtians to be powred into his eares which is well knowne not to ſuffer them to ſink into his heart to worke grace there; but ſetteth heart, and lippes and life contemptuouſlie to deſpiſe them. *Doct.* Obſtinate perſons are vnworthie a reproofe.

Firſt, it is a certaine loſſe of labour to deale with them, and to as good purpoſe to lay a plaiſter to a dead mans wound, as to endeuour to heale them. *Reaſ.* 1.

Secondly, it is a loſſe of thoſe pretious admonitions: the holy things of God are throwne to dogs: and the pearles and ornaments of Chriſtians are caſt to vnteachable ſwine that will trample them vnder feete: Matth.7.6. 2

Thirdly, it cannot be without perill to our ſelues, which God doth not call vs vnto: for their hatred is like to worke diſgrace, or violence, or other hurts which their diſtempered affections doe threaten. So Chriſt ſaith, that hogs will all to rent them that ſo offer to feede them. 3

Inſtruction to be verie circumſpect what perſons we deale with, that there be ſome hope of ſucceſſe. If after walking and ſtanding in wicked waies, they ſit at reſt in the ſcorners chaire, let vs leaue them there and diſquiet them no further. For if we moleſt them, they will trouble vs, and going beyond our bounds againſt the rule of Chriſt, where is our warrant of ſafetie againſt their malice; or of patience, wiſedome, and moderation to containe our ſelues? *Vſe.*

Verſ.8. *But rebuke a wiſe man, and he will loue the.*

9. *Giue admonition to the wiſe, and he will be the wiſer: teach a righteous man, and he will increaſe in learning.*

NOw he commeth on the contrarie ſide to commend the competent hearers of Wiſedome, vpon whom good leſſons are well beſtowed. And they are deſcribed, firſt by their willing receiuing of inſtruction, that they loue them the

better that ſhall deale plainely with them. Secondlie, by the good vſe they make of it, increaſing both in knowledge and practiſe of vnderſtanding, and therefore are called wiſe and righteous.

Doct. 1. The beſt may mend.

Rebuke. Men of beſt knowledge and pietie muſt ſometimes be admoniſhed of their faults. So was *Dauid*, ſo was *Iehoſaphat*, *Ezekias*, *Peter*, and many other. Rich garments require bruſhing, and fine linen hath neede of waſhing, and the moſt pleaſant and delightfull gardens muſt oftentimes be weeded.

Reaſon 1. Firſt, originall corruption doth cleaue vnto their nature and infect their hearts, and many times defileth their behauiour, and though they make it languiſh through wounds that they giue it; yet it will neuer be ſtarke dead ſo long as they bee aliue.

2 Secondly, God hath ordained it as a medicine for humilitie againſt pride, that they ſhall ſtand in neeede of the helpe of their brethren, and ſometime alſo come vnder their cenſures.

3 Thirdly, it is a bond whereby one Chriſtian is knit to another, when the one doth declare loue by giuing of faithfull counſell, and the other by thankfull receiuing of it.

Vſe 1. Inſtruction: Firſt, that the good gifts of Gods children cauſe vs not to denie this duetie to them, when their wants and our opportunitie call for it. Secondly, to conceiue louingly of them that ſhew vs this kindneſſe: they doe good to our ſoules, and befriend vs in our names, by couering our ſinnes from others, and ſhewing them to our ſelues, which elſe might break out to our infamie: Iam. 5. 20. And by this means God ſhall be ſerued, and his Scripture obeyed on both ſides: whileſt the one part doth brotherly admoniſh according to the precept that here is giuen, and the other part doth kindly accept it according to the reaſon annexed.

Confutation of them that too far iuſtifie the waies of good men, approuing their errors in opinion, their ſlips in ſpeeches, their ſlidings in actions, and all elſe to be wel and warrantable, and imitable, if the men be wiſe and godly. Nothing of them is to be miſliked, that hath an example of any good men practiſing

ctiſing the like: but they conſider not, that ſome things may grow on the ſlips that ſpring from the roote; and not all, on the ſience that is ingrafted.

It is a note of a man that is truely religious, to increaſe in grace and vnderſtanding. It appeareth that they liue by their meate, and haue good digeſtion of it, when they grow in ſtature, ſtrength, and ſtomacke. So was it ſaid in the firſt Chapter; Verſ.5. *A wiſe man ſhall heare and increaſe in learning.* The bare hearing doth not neceſſarily argue a wiſe man. For fooles doe often bring their eares to the word: but to heare, and learne, and to learne with increaſe, that doth teſtifie an holy wiſdome. *Doct.1.* He is truely gratious, that growes in grace.

Gods bleſſing doth accompanie ſuch as haue ſinceritie in them, to ad to their ſtock: and from ſuch as haue no more but a ſhew, hee taketh away that alſo, that they may appeare to be diſſemblers: Luk.8.18. *Reaſon* 1.

Secondly, ſound vnderſtanding doth diſcouer the defect of vnderſtanding: what great neede they haue, what little ſtore they haue, and the dore of Gods ſtorehouſe and treaſure opened to them for their full ſupplie. 2

Thirdly, they know the wants of theſe heauenly iewels, that their price is ineſtimable, and therefore they grow inſatiable in their deſires, and though they get much, yet ſtill they labour for more, and bee as greedie in hauing, as though they had nothing at all. 3

Fourthly, the former taſting and feeding on this celeſtiall food hath brought them to a perpetuall longing after it: the more they receiue, the more hungrie they are: the exerciſe of eating hath ſo ſharpened their appetite, as they deſire continually to eate. 4

Inſtruction to approoue our wiſedome and righteouſneſſe in proceeding to be more wiſe and righteous: and ſo ſhall we beſt pleaſe God himſelfe. As Saint *Paul* perſwadeth vs in one place: *Wee beſeech you brethren, and exhort you in the Lord Ieſus, that yee increaſe more, and more, as yee haue receiued of vs; how yee ought to walke, and to pleaſe God.* *Vſe* 1. 1.Theſ.4.1.

So ſhall wee bee inriched with more full holineſſe.

For

1. Cor. 7. 1. For thereunto he alſo encourageth vs in another place: *Seeing we haue theſe promiſes, dearely beloued, let vs cleanſe our ſelues from all filthineſſe of the fleſh and ſpirit, and grow vp vnto full holineſſe in the feare of God.* So ſhall wee bee eſtabliſhed more firmely, and kept from all apoſtaſie and backſliding. As Saint *Peter* teacheth: 2. Pet. 3. 17. 18. *Beware leſt ye be plucked away with the error of the wicked, and fall from your owne ſtedfaſtneſſe. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt.*

2 Reproofe of *Non-proficients* which are taught much and learne little, and practiſe nothing at all. Secondlie, of full perſons which thinke they haue attained to a ſufficiencie: they haue plied it hitherto, and now they may giue ouer their labours, they haue gotten enough, and now what neede they ſeeke any more? But let them heare what the ſpirit of God
Apoc. 3. 17. teſtifieth of their caſe to the conceited Laodiceans, when they ſaid they were rich and increaſed with goods, and wanted nothing, then they were wretched, and miſerable, and poore, and had nothing. Hee that hath as much grace as euer he did deſire, did neuer truly deſire to haue any. And hee that doth purpoſe neuer to be better, will preſently grow to be worſe, and laſt of all prooue to be ſtarke naught.

3 Conſolation for ſuch as bee of the mending hand, though they haue defects and imperfections, and bee drawne aſide ſometimes with luſts and corruptions: yet if they ſtill get ground of theſe enemies, and ſome addition come daily to their vnderſtanding and deſires, by euery Sermon and other good exerciſe, let them beleeue the teſtimonie of the holy Ghoſt, they be in the number of the wiſe and righteous.

Verſ. 10. *The beginning of wiſdome is the feare of the Lord, and the knowledge of holie men is vnderſtanding.*

HAuing ſo much commended Wiſdome and ſo earneſtly perſwaded men vnto it, he ſheweth now wherein it doth conſiſt, that men might not be deceiued by the counterfeit colour of it, deſcribing it:

Firſt,

Firſt, by the matter, that is, true pietie and religion, called commonly in the word, the feare of God, becauſe it is an eſſentiall part therof: and this is not a caſe contingent, as though wiſdome and pietie might ſometimes concurre in one perſon and ſometimes be diſſeuered: but neceſſarie and perpetuall, the one being alwaies the beginning of the other.

Secondly, by the manner, that is, not the knowledge of naturall things that is in Philoſophers: nor the knowledge of ciuill affaires that is in Politicians: nor the hiſtoricall and artificial knowledge of points of religion that is in hypocrites: but the myſticall knowledge of the myſteries of ſaluation, which the ſpirit of God doth reueale to the hearts of Chriſtians. Whereof the holy Ghoſt ſpeaketh at large in the Epiſtle to the Corinthians, Chap. 2.9.10.11. *The things which eie hath not ſeene, neither eare hath heard: neither came into mans heart, are, which God hath prepared for them that loue him. But God hath reueiled them vnto vs by his ſpirit.*

No man can be truly wiſe before he be vnfainedly religious. *Salomon* had experience both of heauenly wiſdome and human wiſdome, of the ſhew of the one, and ſoundneſſe of the other, & thus doth he declare his iudgement: *Let vs feare God and keepe his Commandements, for this is the whole man.* Nothing but this can make a man to be a man, without which he is in worſe ſtate then a beaſt: his glorie and excellencie conſiſteth in it, and all his profit and comfort proceedeth from it. *Doct.* 1. Religious men only are wiſe. Eccleſ.12.13.

Firſt, God himſelf doth vſually in his Word call all vnregenerate men fooles, eſpecially euery where in this booke expreſſely, and by conſequent in Deut.32.28.29. *They are a nation voide of counſell, neither is there any vnderſtanding in them. O that they were wiſe, then they would vnderſtand this: they would conſider their latter end.* Now he ſeeth all things as they be, and not as they ſeeme to be: and foreſeeth all euents that ſhall fall out hereafter, and therefore his teſtimonie is to be receiued. *Reaſon* 1.

Secondly, wiſdome is a ſtreame that floweth onely from the Word, and that to them that make conſcience and not a bare profeſſion of it. So he ſpeaketh by the Prophet concerning hypocrites: *Loe they haue reiected the word of the* 2

Lord, and what wiſedome is there in them? Ier.8.9.

3 Many infallible fruits of the ſpirit be incloſed in it and iſſue from it, and are euermore in companie with it, as puritie, gentleneſſe, readineſſe to be intreated, mercy and fulneſſe of good fruits, ſinceritie, &c: Iam.3.17.

4 The miſerable condition of all irreligious people, whereas euery one is happie that is wiſe.

Vſe 1. Inſtruction, that if we would haue the eſtimation, comfort, direction, ſucceſſe, or any benefit of wiſedome, let vs not labour for a politicke head, but a holy and ſanctified hart: not ſo much for learning and abilitie to diſcourſe & diſpute of points of religion, as for faith to beleeue, and a good conſcience to

Deut.4.5.6. performe obedience. *I haue taught you*, ſaith *Moſes, ordinances, and lawes, as the Lord my God commanded me, that ye ſhould do euen ſo within the land whither yee goe to poſſeſſe it. Keepe them therefore, and doe them: for that is your wiſdome and vnderſtanding in the ſight of the people.*

2 Confutation of them that eſteeme all to be wiſe that goe beyond others in wit: and them eſpecially that compaſſe great liuings and wealth. Was not *Achitophel* more witty then any? and did hee not yet play the foole more then all? hath not Satan more ſubtiltie and cunning then all the men in the world? and yet the moſt fooliſh creature to worke his owne woe that euer God made in the world. The Scripture calleth him a principalitie and a power and ſpeaketh of his craft, but no where giueth him the teſtimonie of wiſedome. And to them that know how to feather their neaſts and increaſe their ſtate, the rich man in the Goſpell may be a preſident: he could get, and

Luk.12.20.29 ſaue, and keepe, and thriue as long as hee liued, and yet God called him *foole* when he died: *and ſo* (ſaith he) *is euery one that gathereth riches to himſelfe, and is not rich in God.*

3 Conſolation againſt the reproches, that are caſt vpon men when they ſet themſelues to feare the Lord: now (ſaith the world) they begin to be fools, hitherto they haue liued in good account, eſteemed for ſenſible wiſe men, and henceforth they will be nothing ſet by: now (ſaith the Lord) they begin to be wiſe: hitherto they could haue no approbatiõ frõ God or good men,

men, but now they take the way for good vnderſtanding.

And the knowledge.] Sound and ſanctified knowledge is the mother of all Chriſtian deuotion: where that faileth, there can be no ſincere pietie. So ſaith God himſelfe in the firſt Chapter, verſ. 29. *They hated knowledge, and did not chuſe the feare of the Lord.* Which *Iob* reproues in the wicked worldlings of his time: *They ſay to God, depart from vs, we deſire not the knowledge of thy waies; who is the Almightie, that We ſhould ſerue him?* and *what profit ſhall We haue if we ſhould pray to him?* wherein they declare that they hate his preſence, and reiect the knowledge of his will, and caſt off all care of his worſhip, and ſo there is an irreligious heart, an ignorant minde, and an impious behauiour. *Doct.* 2. No true deuotion without true knowledge. Iob 21. 14. 15.

Firſt, faith doth neuer goe without it: for faith is a perſwaſion, and that perſwaſion is an high degree of knowledge, the heart being firmely aſſured of the truth of that which Gods promiſe did giue them to vnderſtand. *Reaſon* 1.

Secondly, the vnderſtanding is the eie of the ſoule to giue direction, and the fountaine from whence all good affections doe ſpring. 2

Thirdly, there can bee no exerciſe of godlines (which is the very breath of al religion) where the commandement and promiſe of God is not apprehended. 3

Fourthly, the Diuell hath the dominion of them that liue altogether in blindneſſe: for hee is the Prince of darkeneſſe; he taketh, and holdeth, and leadeth them according to his wil: and he will neuer be willing that either God ſhould be ſerued, or any man ſhould be ſaued. 4 Epheſ. 6. 12. 2. Tim. 2. 26.

Inſtruction to vſe all induſtrie and diligence to get knowledge: eſpecially that which hath the ſtampe of grace vpon it, and is proper to the people of God. Send to heauen for it by prayer to the Lord: ſearch in the word for it with all good indeuors, by hearing & reading, by meditation and conference, by obſeruation and experience, and all other good exerciſes. *Vſe* 1.

Confutation of ſuch as be altogether careleſſe of vnderſtanding, that haue paſt a ſtate of their ſoules to ignorance for terme of life: they would be reputed religious and godly, and 2

yet want both metal and making of all religion and godlines: but they, though they bee without knowledge, haue (as they ſay) a good mind. But why ſaith the Scripture? *without knowledge the mind is not good:* Prou.19.2. Yet they hope in another world, to ſpeede as well as the beſt: and yet the Apoſtle teacheth that *Chriſt ſhall come in flaming fire, rendring vengeance to them that doe not know God:* doe they ſpeede ſo well that bee condemned? 2.Theſ.1.8.

Secondly, of them that haue gotten ſome knowledge, but are voide of all ſinceritie and obedience: it is not a vertue for their good, but a ſin for their hurt: and though for a time they make it ſerue their turne for a ſhew, yet it will turne to their ſorrow in the end: for they increaſe the hardneſſe of their hart, and the guiltineſſe of their conſcience, and the number of their ſtripes, according to the meaſure of their fruitleſſe knowledge: Luk.12.47.

Verſ.11. *For thy daies ſhall be multiplied by me, and the yeeres of thy life ſhall be augmented.*

12. *If thou be wiſe, thou ſhalt be wiſe for thy ſelfe: and if thou be a ſinner, thou alone ſhalt ſuffer.*

AFter the deſcription of wiſdome, whereby it may bee rightly diſcerned, is here propoſed the profit and reward of it, whereby we are perſwaded to imbrace it: and that is,

Firſt, in a peculiar, namely, long life: which is not ſo to bee vnderſtood as though it were perpetual, and ſo of abſolute neceſſitie: for then good men muſt grow to be old men, and all which die young, ſhould die wicked and damned: but that God hath the keeping of their liues in ſuch good ſafety as they ſhall neuer be taken away before due ſeaſon: they ſhall not die ſo ſoone as that it would be better for them to liue longer: nor liue ſo long, as that it might be hurtfull they died not ſooner. The point doth *Eliphaz* truely expound to *Iob*, and all other righteous perſons: Iob.5.26. *Thou ſhalt go to thy graue in a full age, as a crop of corne commeth in due ſeaſon into the barne.* Now all graine is not of equall proportion of growth: ſome is ſowne before

Iob 5.26.

fore others, and yet is cut downe after them: ſome is ſowen after others, and commeth to maturitie before them: ſo that god husbands diſpoſe not of their harueſt by meaſure of time, but by the ripeneſſe of their corne: and two extremities they prouidently auoid; neither too haſtily to inne the fruits of their fields or trees, for ſo they would wither away: neither to defer the gathering of the after they be ripe, for ſo they would drop off, and ſhed, and grow to rottenneſſe. Afterwards he declareth the recompence of wiſedome in generall: that the poſſeſſion and practiſe therof, is not only a ſeruice to God, nor alone for his ſake ſo often required: but redoundeth alſo to the profit of them ẏ be owners and performers of it. And to this is oppoſed the contrarie ſtate of thoſe peruerſe and wilfull ſcorners, that howſoeuer their deſire and purpoſe is to doe miſchiefe to others, yet all their malice returneth on their owne heads.

Thy daies ſhall be multiplied, &c.] Wiſedome and grace do not onely procure our life to be euerlaſting in heauen, but of good and ſufficient continuance in earth. So is ſhe ſaid to come like a liberall and bountifull Lady: Chap. 3.16. which brought her hands ful to beſtow vpon her friends: *length of daies being in her right hand, and in her left hand riches & glory:* becauſe life it ſelfe is more pretious then wealth and aduancement which depend vpon it, and are but ornaments of it, therefore ſhe bringeth the continuance of that in her right hand, as a gift of greater value: and the other in the left, as inferiour to it, but all verie excellent comming out of thoſe glorious hands. *Doct.* 1. Grace giues maintenance for this life, as well as for eternall life.

Firſt, that prouidence and power of God doth protect vs from all the euils that might befall vs: as we vſe to deale in our gardens and orchards, plucking vp the nettle and weedes, and preſeruing the good hearbes: rooting out the briars and brambles, and nouriſhing the fruitfull trees. *Reaſ.* 1.

Secondly, his Angels haue a charge to keepe vs, by whoſe miniſtrie our life is defended: Pſalm. 91.10.11. 2

Thirdly, the feare of God doth make the heart good, and a good heart is made cheereful, and a cheerefull heart procureth good health, and good health prolongeth the life. 3

Fourthly, a good man will ſeeke and ſue to God by pray- 4

ers in the good eſtate of his bodie to haue it continued, in weakeneſſe and infirmities to be cured: and this will they do ordinarily, as *Ezekias* did in a caſe extraordinarie, alwaies reſigning themſelues to his will.

5 Fiftly, a godly man will be truſtie to himſelfe in the keeping of his owne bodie (auoiding ſurfetings, and diſtempers, and diſorders, whereby wicked men doe weaken themſelues) and will conſcionablie vſe all fit meanes of comfort, health and ſafetie.

Vſe 1. Confutation of them that thinke the ſeruices of wiſedome to bee the greateſt meanes to ſhorten mens daies. They will kill themſelues (ſay they) by faſting, and praying, and muſing, and reading, and running to Sermons. But thus to complaine, is indirectly to blaſpheme God; either with imputation of vnfaithfulneſſe towards them that ſeeke him, or with impotencie, and defect of power: for they inferre that hee windeth them into danger by promiſe of ſafetie; or that the repaire of the ſoule muſt needs be the ruine of the bodie, and ſo he cannot heale the one part of man, without hurting of the other.

Inſtruction to take this holy receit, which is a medicine for all diſeaſes, and a remedie to preuent all kind of miſchiefes. No Phyſicke ſo forcible to health, nor plentie ſo ſufficient againſt want, nor any multitude of men and munition is ſo able to defend vs from violence.

3 Conſolation to them that haue a good conſcience, that they alwaies euery where haue their ſafetie with them, becauſe they carrie grace in their hearts, and God carries them in his hands. That is true of euery faithfull ſeruant of God, that *Abigail* did ſpeake concerning *Dauid*: that their *ſoule is bound in the bundle of life with God*: it lieth not looſe and ſcattered for enemies to finde, and take vp, or tread vpon at their pleaſure; but it is in Gods owne cuſtodie, and bound vp, that it ſhall neither drop downe, nor bee wreſted from him. Hee will defend them in warre, and feede them in dearth, and preſerue them in peſtilence, and death ſhall neuer come before they may comfortablie bid it welcome: Iob. 5. 19. 20.

1. Sam. 25. 29.

Doct. 2. *If thou be wiſe*, &c.] Of all men Chriſtians bee moſt prouident

dent to procure their owne good proſperitie. That teſtimony is giuen of them by the Lord himſelfe, Chap.3.13.14. *Bleſſed is the man that findeth wiſdome, and the man that getteth vnderſtanding. For the merchandiſe thereof is better than the merchandiſe of ſiluer, and the gaine thereof is better than gold.* They that obtaine not onlie the knowledge of wiſedome but the ſound and ſure poſſeſſion thereof, which is meant by finding, are all in a bleſſed ſtate, not deſtitute of any happineſſe. The merchants which trafficke with the Indians for gold, and pearles, and pretious ſtones, make not their commoditie in any proportion comparable to theirs that deale with the God of heauen for the graces of his Spirit. Onely Chriſtians are good huſbands.

Firſt, in reſpect of outward ſtate they are in good caſe, the bleſſing of God neuer failing to miniſter vnto them all good things, in fitteſt ſeaſon, in meeteſt manner, and moſt competent, and conuenient meaſure. They haue euery thing that they neede, and enioy the vſe of euery thing that they haue. God bleſſeth their labours, that thereby they get ſubſtance: God bleſſeth their ſubſtance, that thereby they are nouriſhed by them: God bleſſeth their nouriſhment, that there-withall they haue ioy and comfort: and if at any time they fall into afflictions, they haue ſupportation in them, deliuerance from them, and benefit by them. All ſickneſſe ſhall be wholſome to them: all diſgraces for their honour: all loſſes for their gaine: all dangers for their ſafetie: all troubles for their peace and quietneſſe. *Reaſons* 1. Pſalm. 128.2.

Secondly, in reſpect of the ſtate of their ſoules, the bleſſednesſe whereof conſiſteth in righteouſnes: and that doth yeeld ſuch a benefit, which, as the Apoſtle doth truely teſtifie, doth farre ſurpaſſe the capacity of all ſenſe and humane reaſon. Which wil appeare, firſt, if we conſider ỹ miſerie out of which they haue eſcaped: they were the enemies of God, and are reconciled to him: they were moſt deepely in debt, and are diſcharged of it: they were bondmen, and are made free: they were condemned, and are pardoned: they were dead in ſins and treſpaſſes, and are quickned to euerlaſting life. Secondly, if we reſpect the gifts that God vouchſafeth them: their nature: 2

ture is healed, their ſoules are ſanctified, they haue a free acceſſe to God, the holy Ghoſt is in them, Ieſus Chriſt is beſtowed vpon them: all his merits, and all his graces, and all his prerogatiues are communicated vnto them. Thirdlie, the fruit of their wiſdome is apparant at their death: for then doth their faith, and faithful behauior ſtand to them, and viſit their harts, and animates them with hope againſt the temptations of Satan, and feare of hell, and damnation, and all kindes of deſperation. If it be true that *a good conſcience is a continuall feaſt*, then eſpecially is it moſt forcible and comfortable at that time. Fourthly, the full and perfect reward of it ſhall be rendred vnto them in the life to come, and chiefly at the laſt day, in the preſence of God, and men, and angels, elect and reprobate, and euery particular of euery ſort, who ſhal heare their praiſes, and ſee their glorious aduancement.

Prou. 15. 15.

Vſe 1. Confutation of them, that eſteeme mortified Chriſtians of all other creatures to be moſt ſilly, and voide of prudencie, and moſt careleſſe, & void of all forecaſt for their affaires. Secondly, of them that think all the precepts, and doctrines of obedience are onely for the exerciſe of the Miniſters authoritie, and nothing for the furtherance of the peoples commodity, ſo they call it, Pſal. 2. 3. *Let vs breake their bands, and caſt their cordes from vs.* As who would ſay, it is on impriſonment, and grieuous reſtraint to be vnder Chriſt and his Miniſterie. Whereas inſtruction is for his vſe that doth receiue it, and not for his wil, that doth deliuer it: It is not a packe or burden laid vpon his ſhoulders to carrie for others: but as monie put into his purſe to vſe for himſelfe.

2 Inſtruction to take greateſt paines in husbanding the heart, to labour moſt for the crop of grace, and to be moſt diligent in doing of good. Corne, and cattell, and monie, and other wealth may be gotten for other men, and happilie for our enemies: but the holy leſſons that wee conſcionably learne, the gracious ſpeeches that we ſeaſonablie vtter, and all the good workes that we duely performe, are treaſured vp in heauen for our owne ſoules.

3 Conſolation againſt the manifold diſcouragements which might

might weaken the hearts of ſuch as be poſſeſſed with this wiſdome. They are railed vpon by ſome to be hurtfull men: they are ieſted at by others to be fooliſh men: they are threatned, they are perſecuted, and euery way iniuriouſly dealt with: yet let none of theſe things driue them from their wiſdome, and make them turne fooles, to cauſe them to leaue off friendſhip with themſelues, and to forſake their owne gaine. It is more beneficiall for them to be godly, then it can be hurtfull to bee moleſted. A flight of ſnow, or ſhower of raine, or flaſh of lightning, or clap of thunder, cannot compell a thriftie farmer to diſclaime his good ground, and ſurceaſe his husbandrie.

If thou be a ſcorner, &c.] The wicked bee moſt their owne foes. Which point this holy wiſdome confirmeth in the former Chapter, verſ. 35. *Hee that ſinneth againſt mee hurteth his owne ſoule, and all that hate me loue death.* In all the attempts, and proceedings againſt good men, wiſdome it ſelfe is ſmitten at, for their quarrell is againſt the ſeruants for the miſtreſſe ſake: but they onely ſinne againſt it, but can doe no hurt vnto it; for that redoundeth wholly vpon themſelues. And though they be all for themſelues, and carried ſtrongly with ſelfe-loue in affection, yet they doe the worke of mortall hatred, and become their owne deadly foes in effect. *Doct. 3.* The wicked man hath no foe like himſelfe.

The reaſons which were alleaged for the former point, will alſo make this manifeſt by the contrary. For as wiſe men and ſcorners ſerue contrarie maſters, and haue contrarie hearts, and behauiours: ſo there is alſo a contrarietie of condition, and of euery thing that befalleth vnto them. Whatſoeuer miſeries therefore thoſe other eſcaped, theſe ſhall ſurely fall into: and whatſoeuer happines the other attained vnto for bodie, ſoule, ſtate, or name, in life, at death, departed hence, and at the reſurrection, theſe ſhall be depriued of them. *Reaſon.*

Terror for ſinfull men which ſeeme to be in ſafetie and verie good caſe, hauing yet ſuffered nothing but hardnes of hart, and the poiſon of ſinne working in their ſoules, which they leaſt of all doe feele. They muſt ſuffer alſo the paine of ſinne, as well as the pleaſure: and who knoweth how ſoone, *Vſe 1.*

and ſodainely it will come vpon them. But in the meane time they plague ſuch as ſet againſt them, and purſue them that goe about to croſſe their courſes: and this they glorie in, as a matter of great contentment. But herein they make others happy, and themſelues miſerable, they procure the bleſſing of God vpon them whom they maligne as enemies, and bring the curſe vpon their owne ſoules and bodies. But yet they preuaile further in their purpoſes: by feare, or flattery, by cõpany, counſell, or conſtraint, they draw men into ſinne; and this they take to be a victorie, and now others be in as bad caſe as they, and if things fall out to be amiſſe with them, they ſhall haue company in ſorrow: but this will bee no eaſe of their burden; for that ſhall lie wholly vpon themſelues. They that ſuffer themſelues to be ſeduced by them, ſhall likewiſe ſuffer puniſhment with them, but not detract any from theirs, but adde much more vnto it, according as the caſe ſtandeth with Satan.

Verſ. 13. *A fooliſh woman is alwaies babling, ſhe is ignorant, and knoweth nothing.*

THus much hath been ſpoken of wiſdoms wholſome banquet, which the Lord to that end propoſed, that we might be allured vnto it. Now followeth the feaſt of Folly, which ſhee maketh to the end, that ſhee may poiſon her gueſts, and God diſcouereth, for this purpoſe that wee might auoid it. And here, as alſo in that which followeth, ſhee is deſcribed by her qualities and behauiour, carrying the right ſtampe and print of an harlot. One thing is, that ſhee is giuen to much talke, to make a noiſe: which was the note of the whoriſh woman, Chap. 7. 11. The meaning here is, that ſinfulneſſe and Satan, by the mouthes of ſinfull perſons, doe pretend manie reaſons to iuſtifie any wicked cauſe, and vſe cunning perſwaſions to draw men thereunto; as the vnchaſt woman doth flow with intiſing ſpeeches. And though ſhe haue a lauiſh tongue, yet we know (according as wee vſe to ſay) that none is ſo bold, as blind Bayard. The drift is, that the factors for follie, ſuch as labour to promote ſinne, be vtterly deſtitute of ſauing

vnder-

vnderſtanding, which was called before, the knowledge of holie men.

She is babling, &c] It is no ſure note of a good cauſe to be ſet forth with many words. *Hananiah* maintained his cauſe more ſtifly than *Ieremie*, for hee after a ſort gaue place to the others confident aſſeuerations: but *Ieremie* maintained his cauſe more truelie than *Hananiah*, for God and experience confirmed his teſtimonie: Ier.28. *Zidkyah* and his companions the falſe Prophets were more violent in giuing incouragement to *Ahab* for his voiage to Ramoth Gilead: but *Micaiah* was more faithfull in diſſwading him from it: 1.King.22. *Doct.*1. Many words make not a matter good.

Firſt, wickedneſſe hath many tongues to ſpeake by, all vnregenerate men being readie to pleade for it. *Reaſon* 1.

Secondly, Satan doth ſharpen mens wits, and fine their tongues, and euery way aſſiſt them, that ſtand in defence of his cauſes, and kingdome. 2

Thirdlie, all vngodly men by their owne diſpoſition are earneſtlie affected to folly and leaudneſſe, being as their right hand and deareſt member of their body; and therefore will ſpeake in the behalfe therof, as if the caſe did neerely concerne their owne eſtate. 3

Fourthly, all the arguments, that are brought for any bad cauſe, are light and vtterly voide of force: and therefore that which faileth in qualitie, they will fill vp in quantitie, and ſo ſupplie the want of weight by multitude of words. 4

Fiftly, ſucceſſe doth much animate folly, and her adherents, to ſpeake much: for be the matter neuer ſo vniuſt and falſe: be the reaſons neuer ſo ſlight, and ſlender: be the perſon neuer ſo baſe and abiect: yet if a ſinner ſtand vp for ſinne, all ſinfull men euery where will giue him allowance. 5

Admonition, that we neuer conclude the equitie of a cauſe by the number of words, as though the force of the matter ſtood in the violence of ſpeech, and all were weake that either wanted ſtrong breath for it, or elſe had vehement oppoſition againſt it. The multitude of allegations is of no value, where ſoundneſſe is wanting in the points alleaged. And it is vſuall that innocent perſons be leaſt forward to ſpeake, and *Vſe* 1.

ſuch as bee faultie be ſeldome giuen to ſilence. When *Moſes* came to take vp the matter betweene the two Iſraelites, hee that was moſt leaud, was moſt loud: the offender that did the wrong, was moſt readie to complaine of wrong offered. *What wilt thou kill mee, as thou didſt the Egyptian yeſterday?* Act.7. 27.28.

2 Confutation of them that iuſtifie Poperie, and the corruptions of it by this, that many take part with it. Much is ſaid for it, great commendation is giuen of it. All this is true, it is much praiſed, but only by the fooliſh babling woman: they are full of ſpeech, and frequent in writing, and yet doe nothing els, but ſome out froth and falſehood. If multitude or cries of commendations were ſufficient to credit a cauſe, and cleare it, *Diana* were a glorious goddeſſe, ſo highly magnified by the generall applauſe of the Epheſians: Act.19.28. Secondly, of ſuch as take it for an inuincible teſtimonie againſt the Goſpell, and the ſincere profeſſours of it, that they be ſo much blamed, and ſo many profeſſe their diſlike of them. So they dealt with *Ieremie*, though he neither bought nor ſold with them, nor offered any colour of iniurie to them, yet euery man ſpake euill of him: Ier.15.10. So Chriſtianitie in *Paules* time was counted a ſect, and euery where ſpoken againſt. And ſo our Sauiour himſelfe had the ſentence of death inforced vpon him, by the violent crie of the people.

Doct.2. Follies friends are moſt fooles.

Ignorant, &c.] So farre as any man giueth himſelfe to bee an Agent for ſinne, ſo farre he bewraieth his owne ignorance. All deceiuers and euill men are firſt deceiued: 2.Tim.3. 13. The diuell firſt catcheth one, and maketh him a baite to take another, as it fell out in the ouerthrow of our firſt parents.

Reaſon 1. Firſt, many of them haue their minds darkned with want of knowledge, that they cannot diſcerne betwixt light and darkneſſe, truth and falſehood.

2 Secondly, all the reſt haue their hearts blindfolded with wilfulneſſe, that they will not vnderſtand. For if they know the will of God, and the meaning of his word, they diſcerne not of his nature that he is offended with euery thing which is contrarie

contrarie to his word. Or if they apprehend that, and conceiue it to be ſo: yet they thinke him remiſſe, that hee will not ſo ſeuerely puniſh them that offend him. Or if they haue not ſuch an erroneous opinion of his dealing towards all, yet they hope for indulgence to themſelues, that he will caſt off ſome part of his iuſtice to diſpenſe with them, howſoeuer the caſe ſtandeth with others. As *Moſes* bringeth them in, bleſſing themſelues in their hearts, and ſaying: *I ſhall haue peace, although I walke according to the ſtubbornneſſe of mine owne heart:* Deut. 29. 19.

Reproofe of their follie that ſeeke to gather the praiſe of knowledge out of the practiſe of ignorance; that contradict, and diſgrace all ſound points of ſanctification. Of which ſort alſo are they that trouble the Church by ſetting abroach new, fruitleſſe, fantaſticall, and pernicious opinions, or reuiuing thoſe that haue been formerly ſuppreſſed, or managing thoſe that be preſently in queſtion. Theſe men beguile themſelues and beguile the world with a ſhew of learning, but God and good men doe deeme it want of learning. For ſo the Apoſtle teſtifieth: *If any man teach otherwiſe, and conſenteth not to the wholeſome words of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and to the doctrine which is according to godlineſſe, he is puft vp and knoweth nothing.* 1. Tim. 6. 3. Their skill, and readineſſe in this caſe to croſſe the truth, proueth not a ſpirituall growth, but a fleſhly groſſenes, they are not filled with grace, but ſwolne with carnall conceitedneſſe. *Vſe.*

Verſ. 14. *Shee ſitteth at the dore of her houſe, on a ſeate in the hie places of the Citie.*

HE continueth ſtill the allegorie, reſembling wickedneſſe to an harlot, whoſe propertie is to be abroad in the ſtreets to meete with companions, and to intice men to folly by her lookes and behauiour: which alſo ſinne doth by her ſubtilties to ſeduce mens ſoules. And yet ſhe goeth not as an ordinarie ſtrumpet, or a vagabond, but taketh ſtate vpon her like a courtizan. Shee ſitteth on a ſeate in the ſtreete, which was wont to be a ſigne of honour, Iob. 29. 7. And the word ſignifieth a

throne or chaire of eſtate, which were for Princes or principall perſons.

Doct. Great men vngratious, may be as ſinfull as any.

On a ſeate, &c.] Great men without grace be as much ſubiect to ſinne and folly, as poore men. The Scripture confirmeth this, when it compareth ſuch kind of perſons to viler creatures: Pſal. 49. 20. *Man in honour which vnderſtandeth not, is like to beaſts that periſh.* He diſpraiſeth not all men of honour: for when wiſdome and dignitie meete together, the one is an ornament to the other: but thoſe that bee deſtitute of vnderſtanding, hee matcheth not with common men, or vileſt people, but maketh equall to the baſeſt kind of brutiſh beaſts.

Reaſon 1. Firſt, they haue the ſame roote and fountaine of corruption which is in all other men.

2 Secondly, they haue more allurements to induce them vnto euill than other men haue; their great abundance to draw them on to voluptuouſneſſe: their might and power to imbolden them to oppreſſion: there high degree, with the charmes and inchauntments of flatterers to make them high minded, and to keepe them from all humiliation, and repentance.

3 Thirdlie, Satan doth in a ſpeciall manner ſeeke to make a prey of them. For they bring whole flockes and flights of others into the net with them. Some they leade with counſell and company, and ſome they driue by force, and violence; and their example, and countenance doth bring ſinne into credit, whereby it is made exceeding infectious. In all which reſpects it was ſaid of *Rehoboam*, the ſonne of *Nebat*, that he made Iſrael to ſinne.

Vſe 1. Inſtruction to ſuch as bee in eminent places, and are great perſonages, that they be as watchfull ouer their ſoules, as the vulgar ſort and meaneſt perſons. The aſſault of the diuell vpon them is certaine and forcible. Their owne ſtrength as ſmal, their ourthrow as dangerous, and their puniſhment as grieuous. And therfore it is not a contemptible worke, and vnmeet for their places, to pray often, to heare the word, and exerciſe all other ſeruices of religion; vnleſſe it be an honourable

ble thing to bee a ſlaue to Satan, and fit for their degree to periſh.

Confutation of their opinions, which ſo admire the ſtate of men of wealth and worſhip, as if euerie one that had power, and titles, were neceſſarily wiſe and happie: whereas here it appeareth, that folly doth ſo poſſeſſe many of them, that they are wholly tranſformed into her, and in ſtead of being reputed reuerend, & wiſe men, they are called by the name of this fooliſh woman. The like in effect is ſpokē of them, Eccleſ.10.6.7. *Folly is ſet in great excellencie, and ſeruants be riding on horſes*; when ſeruile men, whoſe hearts be in bondage to ſinfull luſts, attaine to greatneſſe. 2

In the high places, &c.] Aſſemblies and meetings of men be ſeldome without the companie of ſinfulneſſe, and Satan. For Sinne and Satan frequent great aſſemblies. *Doct.* 2.

Sinne will be one in the congregation of God, where they come together to pray againſt him, where the Lord ſtriketh at him, and woundeth him with his word; and therefore will more boldlie come to other aſſemblies, which bee onelie for ciuill affaires, and chiefelie when they bee for ſinfull exerciſes, as may appeare by the effect of *Baal-Peors* Wake; Numb.29.

Firſt, there be many to worke vpon: and therefore greater is the likelihood of ſucceſſe. *Reaſ.* 1.

Secondly, there is vtterance and vent for many ſinnes which men vſe not to practiſe alone by themſelues: as ſwearing, lying, bragging, ſcoffing, railing, flatterie, and all kind of euill ſpeeches; beſides many actions, and geſtures, which be proper to companie. 2

Thirdlie, he hath more helpes with him there, than when hee dealeth with one alone in ſecret. For, they that be peruerted ioyne with him to peruert others: and they which were bad before, are ſo made much worſe. It would haue bin hard to raiſe a rebellion againſt *Dauid*, if euery one had been ſingly ſolicited, before there was any aſſembly. 3

Inſtruction, not to walke ſtreets, or haunt much companie without due cauſe, and calling. It is righteous from God, that the diuell ſhould play the Marſhal to take vp them which *Vſe* 1.

ſtraggle

ſtraggle abroad without any warrant. And that was the cauſe of *Dinahs* woe, which would needes goe forth to ſee faſhions: Gen. 34. 1.

When our occaſions do iuſtly call vs to ſuch places, that we prepare to preuent all perils: let the word of God bee in our hearts to keepe vs from ſinne, as we would take preſeruatiues for our bodies, againſt the peſtilence, when the aire is infected. If the diuell caſt his fierie darts at vs, let faith bee readie to quench them: If folly intice vs with guilefull ſpeeches, let wiſdome ſhape her an anſwere, and ſend her packing.

Verſ. 15. *To call them that paſſe by the way, that goe right on their way.*

THis is the end and purpoſe of her being in the ſtreetes, To doe miſchiefe there: not onely to confirme and harden ſuch as be alreadie entred into leaud courſes, but to peruert and draw away thoſe that be inclined to any goodneſſe.

Doct. The diuell an vtter aduerſarie to all good endeauours.

So ſoone as any man beginneth to ſet himſelf to ſeeke God, the diuell and diuelliſh men will be readie to turne him out of the way. So ſtoode the caſe with the Corinthians, Galathians, and ſome other of the Churches: as ſoone as euer they imbraced the doctrine of the Apoſtles, preſently the falſe Apoſtles attempted to corrupt them: Gal. 1. 7. & 3. 1. And ſo was *Paulus* the proconſull dealt with: Act. 13. 8. Wileſt *Paul* was preaching to him, *Elymas* was peruerting of him: whileſt the one built, the other battered, and pluckt down: whileſt the one laboured to make him a Chriſtian, the other indeauoured to keepe him an infidell, and vnbeleeuer.

Reaſ. 1. Firſt, they bee enemies to the feaſt of wiſdome, maligning the glorie of the Goſpell, and the proſperous ſucceſſe of the ſame.

2 Secondlie, they be enemies to the meſſengers of wiſedome; thinking that they ſhall haue too much loue and reuerence yeelded to them, if men receiue comfort, and profit by their miniſtrie: Gal. 4. 17.

3 Thirdly, they bee enemies to mankind, as touching the ſoule;

ſoule; repining that any man ſhould be in a better ſtate then themſelues (though themſelues refuſe to be in a good ſtate) according to the diſpoſition of their old father, who for the ſame cauſe ſo ſoone ſupplanted our firſt parents *Adam* and *Eue*.

Fourthly, they feele ſome preiudice to themſelues, by the departure of men from the ſeruice of Satan: they want their wonted companions, to ioyne with them in their wicked practiſes: beſides the blemiſh that cleaueth to them for vices, by meanes of the credit that accreweth to others by their vertue and goodneſſe. 4

Inſtruction, how to carrie our ſelues toward ſuch as bee nouices in religion. As we come too ſhort of Chriſtian loue, if we be too ſuſpicious and ouermuch miſtruſtfull of their proceeding: ſo wee goe beyond the bounds of godlie diſcretion, if wee be too confident of them, and ſo expoſe our ſelues to perill. *Vſe* 1.

Secondly, to lay a good foundation, and to ſet on ſurelie, when we enter the poſſeſſion of Chriſtianity, that our groundworke faile not in the time of triall; according to the example of the *wiſe man that buildeth his houſe on a Rocke, that though the raine fall, and the floods come, and the winds blow, and beat vpon that houſe, yet it may not fall:* Matth.7.24. For certaine it is, that the diuell by temptations, and our aduerſaries by oppoſitions will make manifeſt what firmeneſſe, and ſoundneſſe is in euery one. Either they will Satanicallie aſſault vs with carnall perſwaſions, or elſe we ſhall bee terrified with comminations and threatnings, or elſe wee ſhall be derided with ſcoffes, and reproches, or we ſhall be traduced with falſe imputations, or wee ſhall be diſquieted with wrongfull moleſtations. 2

Thirdly, that we ſhould be as induſtrious to lead men in the right way, as they be to cal them out: and to helpe them out of the ſnares of the diuell, as they be to hold them in. For that is their ſinne, which they are forbidden to practiſe: this is our dutie which we are commanded to performe. Theirs is falſehood, and crueltie tending to hurt and miſchiefe: ours is faithfulneſſe 3

and mercy for good, and great profit. They be the vaſſals of Satan, and inſtruments of his malice: wee bee the ſeruants of Chriſt, and Miniſters of his graces: all the euill that they doe ſhall be puniſhed with their confuſion, all the good that we do ſhall be rewarded with glorie. Which *Daniel* confirmeth, foreſhewing the ſtate of both ſorts at the laſt day, that *ſome ſhall ariſe to euerlaſting life, and ſome to ſhame and perpetuall contempt. And they that make men wiſe, ſhall ſhine as the brightneſſe of the firmament: and they that turne many to righteouſneſſe, ſhall ſhine as the ſtarres for euer, and euer:* Dan.12.2.3.

Verſ.16. *Who ſo is ſimple, let him come hither, and whoſoeuer is void of vnderſtanding, to him ſhe ſpeaketh.*

WHo ſo is ſimple, &c.] That is, which being ignorant diſcerneth not his blindneſſe, but hath conceit of wiſdome and knowledge.

Let him come hither, &c.] To the companie, counſell, and practiſe of Follie. *And to him that is deſtitute of vnderſtanding ſhee ſpeaketh, viz.* that haue no knowledge of their owne, nor bee willing to goe to Wiſdomes houſe to get any.

Doct. They are eaſilie miſſeled that loue not to learne.

Ignorant perſons that regard not knowledge are the fitteſt praie for deceiuers: Ephes.4.14. The Apoſtle in the Epiſtle to the Epheſians, perſwading them to knowledge, ſheweth the great neede thereof; *That wee henceforth bee no more children, wauering, and carried about with euery wind of doctrine, by the deceit,* or *dice, of men.* Wherein hee declareth the dangerous caſe of ſuch as want vnderſtanding, by two ſimilitudes: one comparing them to little children, and the falſe teachers to craftie gameſters, that vſe to cogge at dice, who can eaſilie beguile a young boy, and ſtrippe him of all that hee plaieth for, though his whole inheritance lie vpon the game. The other comparing them to ſhips, that neither haue anchor to hold them, nor ſterne, and pilot to guide them; and therefore the tides, and tempeſts doe driue them euerie way without reſiſtance.

Firſt,

Firſt, they are alreadie taken by the diuell, and bee in his power, and therefore as vnable to eſcape the ſnares of his fowlers, as the birds that lie fluttering in the net: 2. Tim. 2.26. *Reaſon* 1.

Secondly, they are altogether deſtitute of all iudgement, nothing diſcerning truth from error, light from darkeneſſe, ſafetie from perill, and therefore may bee made to beleeue euerie thing. 2

Thirdly, their hearts and affections bee corrupted, and therfore corrupt counſel wil the more preuaile with them, and corrupt conuerſation bemore pleaſing to them. Such the Apoſtle deſcribeth, ſhewing that *they haue their cogitation darkned, and bee ſtrangers from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, becauſe of the hardneſſe of their heart. Which being paſt feeling, haue giuen themſelues vnto wantonneſſe, to worke all vncleanneſſe, euen with greedineſſe:* Epheſ. 4.18.19. 3

Confutation of them that diſſwade men from ſeeking of knowledge, becauſe there bee ſo many ſeducers that goe about to deceiue. It is dangerous dealing with Scriptures (ſay they) we know not well whom to truſt, the world is ſo full of diſſemblers, and therefore we will neither heare, nor beleeue any Preacher of them all. But they will heare and beleeue Ieſuits, and Seminaries, and popiſh perſons that intice them to idolatrie and diſloyaltie: they will heare and beleeue gameſters, and filthie fellowes that will leade them to luſt, leaudneſſe, riot, and vnthriftineſſe: they will heare and beleeue ſuch as fill their eares with falſe reports, and poiſon their hearts with malice, couetouſneſſe, craft, and crueltie: as though there were no infectious people but Miniſters; no perill of contagion, but at ſermons; none ſubiect to be miſſeled but ſuch as vſe the beſt meanes to know the right way. But conſider the force of their reaſon whereby they would induce men to perſiſt in their blindnes: There be many ſlips, and much counterfeit mettall, and therfore no vſe of a touch-ſtone: there is poiſon prepared for vs, and therefore beware of preſeruatiues; our enemies come armed againſt vs, and therefore let *Vſe.*

vs caſt away our weapons: their purpoſe is to ſurpriſe vs in the darke, and therefore put out at any hand all the light in the houſe. What is it but wiſdome that doth inable vs to trie all things, and to hold that which is good? What is it but knowledge that doth deſcrie the venome of all peſtiferous, and peſtilent opinions? what is it but vnderſtanding that doth diſcouer the dangerous occurrents that will inſue vpon pernicious counſell? For other vſes of this point, ſee verſ.10. Doct.2.

Verſ.17. *Stollen waters are ſweete, and hid bread is pleaſant.*

THis verſe containeth an euent that followeth their yeelding to Follies allurements, that at the firſt they find delight and pleaſure, and great contentation in their intertainement.

Hee alludeth, as it ſeemeth, to the diſorders that are wont to be in harlots houſes, wherein at the meeting of companions they vſe to haue a feaſt, and all the prouiſion is of ſtollen ſtuffe. Either ſeruants filch from their maſters, or otherwiſe they ſteale from their neighbours, hennes, and geeſe, and duckes, and connies, and veniſon, and ſuch things as they can come by: which is called hid food, becauſe as they cannot iuſtifie it, ſo they dare not let it be ſeene, but dreſſe it couertly, and eate it ſecretly in the midſt of the night in the moſt inward and cloſeſt roome of the whole houſe. And whatſoeuer is ſo gotten, and there made ready is verie delicious vnto them, though it were but bread and water.

Doct. Thinges the more vnlawfull, the better liked of bad men.

Thoſe things that bee moſt vnlawfull doe beſt ſatisfie the humors of vnregenerate men. Though Wiſdome make a feaſt of meates that bee daintie and wholſome, and prepare ſpiced cups, with wine that is ſweete and delicate, yet ſhee hath few gueſts that wil viſit her table: but let Folly prouide only bread and water (which they muſt alſo eat in a corner, and hide their heads like malefactors) and ſhee ſhall haue great ſtore that will flocke to her houſe, and accept of her cheere wrth very good liking. In this ſenſe it is ſaid, Chap.20.17. That *the bread*

of

of deceit is ſweete to a man. The vnrighteous trade and courſe of getting is to manie a kind of ſauce to procure a relliſh to their poſſeſſions. They eſteeme euery thing to bee ſo much the more worth, if a craftie head, a violent hand, a guilefull tongue, or any fraudulent meanes hath brought it vnto them.

The ſame proportion holdeth in all other caſes. How many bee carried with brutiſh luſts and affections to ſtrange fleſh, that haue nothing in them of beautie, and in the meane time loath their owne wiues which bee well fauoured, perſonable, and comely? and who almoſt taketh delight in any recreation which is neither vnſeaſonable in reſpect of the time, nor yet vnwarrantable in regard of the manner? It is altogether too freſh and vnſauourie for their taſte, vnleſſe the Diuell powder it with ſome enormous abuſes.

And hence it proceedeth, for that all which is fleſhly and moſt contrarie to the ſpirit of God, is alwaies acceptable to them that be fleſhly, and moſt agreeable to the corrupt nature of man. And ſo ſaith the Apoſtle: Rom. 8. 5. *They that are after the fleſh, ſauour the things of the fleſh.* And it falleth out in this caſe, as it doth in the infirmities of the body, euery maladie doth deſire that which will feede and maintaine it: as it is to bee ſeene in cholericke perſons, and ſuch as bee inclining to the dropſie; the one ſort beſt liking meate that increaſeth choler, the other thirſting ſtill after drinke, whereby the dropſie is nouriſhed. *Reaſon.*

Confutation of Poperie, that hath diſhes for euery carnall mans diet, the whole bodie of it tending to ſenſualitie. Euery ſenſe is thereby fed with fleſhly delights, inſomuch, as any infidell may be greatly refreſhed therewith, and yet not led one ſtep neerer to ſaluation. And as it is for euery mans turne, readie to ſatisfie their carnall humors, ſo men be of their owne accord verie ſtrongly and vehementlie affected to it. It is as naturall for them to bee ſuperſtitious, as it is for nettles, and thiſtles, and other weedes to grow without ſowing or ſetting. *Vſe 1.*

And this is the cauſe why men bee ſo hardlie reclaimed from it, and ſo eaſily vpon weake reaſons readie to reuolt backe vnto it.

2 Inſtruction, that the ſpirituallll delights of the word doe repell the carnall luſt of the world, and the comforts of heauenly things doe ſwallow vp the pleaſures of all earthly vanities. For vnleſſe our hearts bee well fenced againſt them by grace, they will returne to their natiue home, and take poſſeſſion of their ancient habitation.

3 Thirdlie, conſolation to them that diſtruſt theſe fleſhlie delights, which be ſo pleaſing to other mens appetites: it argueth that they haue been well fed at Wiſdomes feaſt, and that is the cauſe why their ſtomacks can no better digeſt the voluptuous meſſes of Folly. It is a cleare caſe that no man can loath the inchanted meate that Satan and ſinne haue dreſſed, but ſuch as haue been nouriſhed by the bread of life, which Ieſus Chriſt himſelfe hath prepared.

Verſ. 18. *But he knoweth not that the dead are there, and that her gueſts are in the depth of hell.*

HEre followeth another euent inſuing vpon the former; that as they had pleaſure at the firſt, ſo they muſt haue paine at the laſt: as their intertainement was with delight, ſo ſhall their reckoning be with deſtruction. It is ſaid, *he knoweth not:* that is, euery one of them that be tractable to her call, haue the perill of their ſtate hid from their eies.

That the dead are there, &c.] That all that giue themſelues to ſuch courſes are ſtrangers from the life of God, and in the power of the firſt death; and *in the depth of hell,* that is, are as certaine to bee damned in the world to come (vnleſſe God giue them repentance) as if they were alreadie in hell fire.

Doct. Sin the more pleaſing, the

According as euery ſinne is more delightfull, ſo is it more dangerous and deceitfull. The ſweete meates of wickedneſſe will haue the ſower ſauce of wretchedneſſe and miſerie. Sinne-

ſulneſſe

fulneſſe will be the bane of tranſgreſſors, as the harlot is commonly of adulterers. It is the holy Prouerbe of God, that when *the bread of deceit is ſweete to the taſte, it turneth to grit, and gravell*, to the torment of the teeth: Chap.20.17. more pernicious.

Firſt, as it appeareth heere, men bee willingly ignorant of the euils to come, when their deſires be ſatiſfied for the preſent. Which thing our Sauiour doth alſo intimate by the example of the old world: when once they gaue ouer themſelues to profit, and pleaſure (as feaſting, and marrying, and planting, and building, and traffiquing) they knew nothing til the flood came, though *Noah* had foretold them aboue an hundred yeeres together. *Reaſon* 1. Mat.24.39.

Secondly, when they be poſſeſt with the delights of ſinne, they are with much difficultie brought to leaue them. As *Zophar* ſheweth: Iob.20.12. &c. That *when wickednesſe is ſweete in their mouthes; they will fauour it, and not forſake it till it turne to a poiſon in their bowels.* 2

Thirdly, in reſpect of the preſent condition of voluptuous perſons, *which liue in pleaſure, that they are dead whileſt they liue:* 1.Tim.5.6. They are ſenſible carcaſes, and breathing carrions. For though they haue a reaſonable ſoule which maketh them to bee men, yet they want the ſpirit of grace which maketh them to be Chriſtians. 3

Fourthly, in regard of their future miſerie: for which Saint *Iames* wiſheth them *to weepe, and howle, and make all kind of lamentation.* For howſoeuer all reprobates ſhall be damned, yet they ſhall ſinke to the bottome of terrors and torments in hell, that haue riſen vp to the top of pleaſures, and curſed proſperitie on earth. 4

Inſtruction, firſt, to foreſee that which will follow, when baites are laid for vs by Satan or wicked men, and account the threatnings of God as certaine as executions; and feare the plagues to follow hereafter, as if wee were forthwith to feele them. *Vſe* 1.

Secondly, that no example preuaile ſo far as to draw vs into a wicked way. Conſider not what they bee in outward appearance

pearance that dwell in Follies houſe, but what their ſtate is preſentlie by Gods teſtimonies, and how they ſhal find it hereafter by their owne experience.

3 Thirdlie, that wee illude not our owne hearts, by hoping to ſhift for one: for neuer any one could auoide the puniſhment by ſhifting. Sinne maketh ſure worke with all her gueſts to giue them their deadlie wound at the entrance: ſo that death waits on Folly to take them preſently at her hands, and hel followeth death, to receiue them afterwards at his hands.

AN

AN EXPOSITION OF THE TENTH CHAPTER OF THE PROVERBS.

CHAPTER X.

THE PARABLES OF SALOMON.

Verse 1. A wise sonne maketh a glad Father: but a foolish sonne is a heauinesse to his mother.

Parables.] That is, wise and graue sentences written by *Salomon*, but inspired by the Spirit of God, for the information of the mind, and the institution of the life, according to the rules of Wisedome, Iustice, and Piety. The other nine Chapters being prefaced as a preface to these, contained a continued discourse, wherein the commendation of Wisedome, and the exhortations to many good duties were prosecuted with varietie of arguments: whereas in these that follow, for the most part, are set downe briefe sayings, euery verse almost comprehending a whole point in it selfe, not growing vpon dependance of that which went before, nor ministring the occasion of that which commeth after. Yet sometimes it falleth out otherwise, and diuers verses together haue dependance one with another, as will appeare in some place of this present Chapter. *A wise sonne*, that is, a vertuous and towardly sonne or daughter, *maketh a ioyfull father*, or mother: *and a foolish son*, that is, a sinful and vngracious child, *is an heauinesse*, and griefe to his mother or father: yet it is not without cause that the mo-

ther is rather put in the latter clause, than the father: for that sex is the weaker, and more impatient of such a crosse: and vsuallie contemptuous children bee bolder to contemne the mother then the father, as Chap.15.20. *A foolish man despiseth his mother*; as *Rebeccah* was more troubled with *Esau* then *Isaac* was: and very often the mothers by too much indulgence and fondnesse are meanes of their childrens vices; and so it is said, *A childe set at libertie maketh his mother ashamed*: Chap.29.15.

Doct. A good sonne makes a glad father.

The comfort or sorrow of parents standeth much in the behauiour of their children. This is euident by the example of *Iacobs* sonnes: whereof *Ioseph*, a gratious child, was neuer but a refreshing to him: but *Simeon*, and *Reuben*, and *Leui*, and most of the rest, by their sinfull actions did fill him with griefe and afflictions: and so had *Dauid* experience both waies, being pearced with sorrow on the one side, by the villanous practises and miserable ends of *Absolon* and *Ammon*: and abounding with ioy on the other side for the singular wisedome of *Salomon*.

Reason.

First, these affections doe proceede from the loue that godly parents doe beare vnto God, that thinking all too little that is done in his seruice, they haue now helpers euen out of their owne loines, that will ioyne with them in the same: and when they haue finished their course and ended their owne daies worke, yet the worke shall still bee continued by their posteritie. We see in humane affaires, that euerie good subiect will be glad to breede vp a sonne that will bee fit and able to serue his Soueraigne: and how can it then but cheere vp the hart and refresh the spirits of Christian fathers or mothers, to haue their children the Lords Souldiers, valiantly fighting his battailes against sinne and Satan, and that in their owne sight and presence? Euery good master, as was *Abraham*, will think it a benefit to haue his seruants to be the seruants of the Lord: and euerie Christian will gladly heare of godly men, in another familie, in another towne, in another countrie, in another kingdome; and therefore much more will religious parents be rauished with ioy to see with their owne eies the feare of God

in their owne houſes, in their owne children, by the bleſſing of God vpon their owne gouernment and praiers: but they cannot but conceiue a great griefe by the ſinfulneſſe of impious children, which wholly caſt off the yoke of all holy obedience, that deſpight him whom they themſelues honor, & blaſpheme that name which they ſanctifie, and reiect that word which their ſoules doe liue by. The Prophets eyes guſhed out with riuers of waters, becauſe ſtrangers and aliants, and euen his verie enemies obſerued not the commandements of God: and therefore much more would he haue mourned when his owne ſons rebelled againſt them. Pſal. 119.136.

Secondly, loue to the people of God will worke gladneſſe, 2
when faithfull men diſcerne their children to be inclining to goodneſſe. For they are growing to bee fruitfull plants in the Lords orchard: and ſo, many ſhall haue profit by them many waies; where as the wicked are as thornes and bryars, and noyſome brambles.

Thirdly, the happy condition of gracious and godly chil- 3
dren themſelues, doth procure to the parents much conſolatiō: for beſides their ſpirituall promotion and dignitie, being made the ſonnes of God, and kingly heires of euerlaſting glory, the fauour and bleſſing of God doth vſually appeare towards them for the things of this life: when rebellious and wicked children haue the curſe of God vpon them, doing miſchiefe and hurt, and receiuing the reward of it by ſhame and infamie, by debts and arrearages, by flight and lurking, by bonds and impriſonment, and oftentimes by an ignominious death and deſtruction.

Fourthly, wiſe children yeeld matter of comfort to their pa- 4
rents, in being officious vnto them, and vſing all good behauiour towards them: for they are moſt forward to obey their commandements, they are moſt cheerefull to relieue their neceſſities; they are moſt faithfull and prouident to preſerue their life, and health, and welfare. In which reſpect the Scripture compareth them to arrowes or any other weapons, whereby men may bee defended: Pſal. 127.4. And as they are preſt and readie to performe euery duty that is required of them: ſo will

they also carefully regard their parents dealings towards them: the father giueth counsell, and the sonne is directed by it: the father giueth rebuke, and the sonne remembleth it: the father giueth correction, and the sonne doth humbly submit himselfe vnto it. Now as the hands of a foolish child what is to be expected but folly, contempt of commandements and counsell, murmuring against admonition and reproofes, resistance against correction and chastisements? If their parents bee in wants, they are ashamed of them, and thinke it an intolerable burthen to bee charged with them; and so shorten their daies by opprobrious and hard vsage: if they haue wealth, they seeke to make a spoile of them; if they bee like to leaue them patrimony or inheritance, no enemie doth so much desire their death: if they be simple, and want vnderstanding, they either vse contemptuously to checke and snib them, or else to mocke and deride them; if they declare their wisedome and true pietie, they shew their bitternesse against their godly zeale and sincere profession.

Vse 1. Instruction. First, to children, to take it as a motiue to stirre them vp & prouoke them to Christian conuersation, That they shal minister comfort to their parents, & pleasure themselues, and please the Lord; for all those concurre and meete together in one. The sonne doth neuer giue iust occasion of gladnesse to his father, but hee hath a iust cause to bee glad for his owne sake; because God hath so seasoned him with grace, and made him acceptable to his friends, and vouchsafed vnto him his owne fauour: Whereas on the contrary side, when the parents are much grieued for the childes misdemeanors, the childe ought to bee more grieued for his owne wretchednesse, for he shall be most punished for his rebellion. Secondly, to parents; that forasmuch as their childrens vice or vertue, is their woe or welfare, therefore they doe their best indeuour to haue their seede to be vertuous and holy. And hee that will doe this, must lay the foundation of being a comfortable father, before hee bee a father, and take the way to haue good children before hee haue children: and that is by a due care that himselfe doe walke in the Lord, that hee propose such an

How a man may be a ioyfull father.

end,

end, and vse such proceeding, and match with such a wife, as will bring the blessing of God vpon his house and posteritie. Secondly, if he be desirous that his children should yeelde him the crop of comfort, he must bestow vpon them the seede of instruction, and the tillage of good education. Thirdly, great care is to be had for the wise and orderly disposing of them in marriage, that all the former hopes be not cut off through the neglect of this duty. For diuers times good people in this regard are like to corn that prospereth well in the blade, but afterwards is either blasted or withered in the eare. Many ingenious and towardly young men and maidens haue been vtterly ouerthrowne by coupling themselues to prophane yokefellowes, and being ingrafted into sinfull families.

Reproofe of those that take least care to get wisedome for their children, but onely labour to prouide them wealth, and thereby they are made idle, and proud, and vnthrifty, and prepared to waste with riot all that they haue gotten with care and trauell. And yet they be far worse, and altogether vnworthy of the name of fathers, that grieue at the graces of the children, and restraine them from all the meanes whereby they might attaine vnto knowledge and wisedome. 2

Consolation to them that be inriched with this treasure of good children, howsoeuer the world goeth with them in their state otherwise. If they be wealthy and stored with possessions, they haue such to leaue them vnto, as are fitted for them, and know how to vse them, and are like long to inioy them. Whereas many parents do leaue portions that are better then the children to whom they are bequeathed: and the good creatures of God are put into the hands of vnworthy men, who are therefore vnable long to retaine them. If they bee poore and destitute of other riches and maintenance, yet the want of things of lesse value is supplied by that which is of more worth, one good childe is better then many wedges of gold: and no earthly inheritance is so fure a demaines, as a religious seede which God doth giue in goodnesse, and by his owne testimony commendeth, as a blessing that maketh a man to be happy: as hee saith, Psal. 127. 3, 4. *As the arrowes in the hand of a strong man,* 3

so are the children of youth. Blessed is the man that hath his quiuer full of them.

Vers. 3. *The treasures of wickednesse profit nothing: but righteousnesse deliuereth from death.*

THE *treasures of wickednesse.*] That is, the greatest abundance of wealth which is euill gotten, and euill vsed, or possessed by an euill owner, *profit nothing*; doe him no good at any time; but least of all at his death, or in time of misery; for so it is intended by the *Antithesis*, & expressed, Chap. 11. 4. *Riches auaile not in the day of wrath, but righteousnesse*; that is, vprightnesse of heart, and holinesse of behauiour, *deliuereth from death*; that is, from destruction, and all other hurtfull dangers. Yet not by any merit of man, but by the mercy of God through Iesus Christ.

The riches of iniquity.] No wicked worldling is any thing the better for his wealth: which thing the Prophet *Dauid* had well considered of, and therefore confidently affirmeth, Psal. 39. 6. *Doubtlesse* (saith hee) *man walketh by a vaine image, he heapeth vp riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them.* He speaketh not of a particular, as though some one man were falne into that errour, but of the whole body of mankinde, in that case as they are descended from *Adam*. Euery man that hath nothing but the nature of man doth take a shew for a substance, the image in the glasse, for the face represented by it: the picture of happinesse which is painted on riches, for true and solide felicitie: and therefore they misse of that which they make most account of. For they haue gathered together goods, and others shall gather the good comfort and fruit of them: and whether they haue prouided for their owne, or for aliants, for friends or for foes, they are altogether vncertaine.

Doct. Wicked mens wealth doth them no good.

But if it be said, that thus far it profiteth them to be wealthy, that they eate and drinke, and liue thereby: our Sauiour answereth, that no mans life consisteth in the abundance of his riches: doe not poore men liue also? are not sheepe, and kine, and all other cattell nourished?

Luk. 12. 15.

Obiect. But they fare better then others; and in that respect they

they haue a commoditie in their wealth aboue others.

Answere. But better fare doth not make their state better; Eccles. 5.11.
it helpeth not their health, it sweeteneth not their sleepe, it refresheth not their harts, it furthereth them to no good seruice. That meate doth a man good which inciteth him to prayer, and thankfulnesse, which mooueth him to compassion and mercie, and maketh him able and readie to exercise euery good dutie in his calling.

First, the store and plentie of riches and possessions doth nothing helpe the state of vnrighteous men in the time of their prosperitie; for that which they haue is none of their owne: they haue neither right nor vse of any thing that is about them, Isai. 61.5. They plow other mens grounds, and plant other mens orchards, and keepe other mens cattel, and become other mens drudges. For so to the comfort of his people doth the Lord himselfe professe, who appointeth to euery one his taske, and destinateth his worke to the purpose of his owne will: *The strangers shall stand and feede your sheepe, and the sonnes of strangers shall be your plowmen, and dressers of your vines*, Isai. 61.5. *Reas.* 1. Isai. 62.5.

And for this cause the Prophet *Habacuk* doth crie out shame vpon their follie, when they thinke themselues to bee very wise and prudent: *Woe be vnto him that increaseth that which is not his, and he that ladeth himselfe with thicke clay.* They make themselues pack-horses, or at least seruile porters which bow their backes to other mens burdens; and shall be recompensed only with feeling the weight of the same. Or let the best be made of it, and be it their owne, yet their owne is nothing but a loade of heauie morter. And this were well, if this were all: but the worst remaineth to bee spoken of, namelie, their burdens of wicked treasures bee as it were bags or purses obtained by stealth, or robberie, which will therefore bring their liues into perill. Hab. 2.6.

Secondly, the abundance of outward things cannot succour them in the time of their calamitie: for so the Prophet threatneth; *Neither their siluer nor their gold shall bee able to deliuer them in the day of the Lords wrath:* Zeph. 1.18. If their danger grew from the heate of mens wrath, there might bee hope that

wealth

wealth would helpe them: for either a summe of money would quench the flame of the aduersaries displeasure, or kindle courage in some others to defend them. But now that God is prouoked against them, it is in vaine to offer gold or siluer to pacifie him, or to ransome themselues; for hee standeth in no neede of them, hee admireth them not as men doe, and they be his dreadie, and at his owne will to bee disposed of. Then to oppose them against him, in way of resistance, it were absurd: for there is no power in them to doe vs good without him: and much lesse therefore to maintaine any man against him. Nay they bee so farre from aiding sinfull men against the hand of God, as that they bee many times weapons in their hands to plague them with strokes of iudgement. It hath neuer been heard that the purse hath preserued the man from the sword of the robber, or the chest from the assault of the theefe: but the contrarie falleth out often, that men bee made a spoile for their money, and brought to ruine; as a tree that hath great bowes and a little roote is ouerturned in a mightie tempest. But then especially doth wealth bring woe to wicked men, when God awaketh their consciences, to behold their owne cruelty and falsehood, and the heauie punishment now readie to be inflicted vpon them for the same. This was *Iudas* his case, and such the Prophet speakes of, Ezech. 7. 19. *They shall cast their siluer into the streetes, and their gold shall be cast afarre off.* That which was dearest to their hearts before, and brought them to sinne, they remoue furthest from them now, when they see the sorrow of it. And besides this, although riches had some greater vertue, and power in themselues, yet they could stand vngodly men in no stead, because they cease when miserie beginneth: when death commeth to men, and they come before the iudgement seate of Christ, the wicked haue horrible sorrowes and terrors vpon them, and all their wealth and substance is fled from them.

Psalm. 49. 7.

Psal. 62. 10. 11

This their state is foreshewne in the Scriptures, as euidently as if it were present, or a thing past, seene perfectly accomplished in euery point. For so the Apostle witnesseth in the reuelation: *The Kings of the earth, and the rich men, and the chiefe Captaines*

Reue. 6. 15. 16

Captaines, and the mightie men, and euerie bondman, and euery free man, hid themſelues in dennes, and among the rockes of the mountaines, and ſaid to the mountaines and rocks, fall on vs, and hide vs from the preſence of him that ſitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the lambe.

Inſtruction. That we neuer corrupt our hearts or peruert our waies to increaſe our eſtate, and augment our wealth. This maketh a wound, but miniſtreth no plaiſter to heale it. It will aſſuredly bring trouble and affliction, but neuer any ſtrength and abilitie, either to preuent or to beare it. And therefore it ſhall be our wiſedome to foreſee the euents that will enſue vpon any vnlawful courſe of gaining. We would not willinglie enter into an houſe viſited with the peſtilence though great cheere were prouided for vs. We would not put on infectious apparrell though they were made of ſilke or ſatten, or ſtuffes that were deareſt. And ſhall we be more prouident for the bodie then for the ſoule? Nay, for bodie ſinglie, more then for bodie and ſoule together? Nay for meere bodie, more then for bodie and ſoule, and ſtate, and name, and ſeede and poſteritie? For, iniquitie will bring a curſe vpon all theſe, and goods preſerue not one of them.

Terror to the wicked that thriue by iniuſtice, as vſurie, oppreſſion, or any indirect meanes of getting. Euery good man may ſay of them, as *Iob* did ſay in the like caſe: *Let the counſell of the wicked be farre from me*: their candle will bee put out, and deſtruction will come vpon them, vnleſſe they breake off their iniuſtice. All their commoditie is to them, as the bait vnto the fiſh, with the hooke: as the corne that is ſcattered for the birds vnder the net: and as the ſweete ſops that are ſet for the rats with poiſon. Iob 21.16.

But righteouſneſſe, &c.] The goodneſſe of a Chriſtian will worke him that happineſſe which no outward goods could euer procure. This was the meſſage that *Habbacuk* was to deliuer to the people of God, to confirme them againſt the dangerous inuaſion of the Babylonians, That the righteous ſhould liue by his faith. It is oppoſed to the proud conceites of the wicked on both ſides. The high minded Chaldeans intended to *Doct.* 2. A Chriſtian mans happines conſiſteth in his grace, not in his goods. Hab 2.4.

deſtroy all, and the ſtubborne hearted Iewes preſumed to eſcape all deſtruction. Now the Lord ſhewed that neither ſide of them ſhould haue their wils. For the faithfull ſhould bee deliuered from death, or the euill of it, notwithſtanding all the power and weapons of the Babylonians. And onely the faithfull had aſſurance of happie deliuerance, notwithſtanding all the armour and riches of the Iſraelites.

Reaſ. 1. First, the efficacie of the Spirit, and the merit of Chriſt doth free them from the firſt death, and giue them a part in the firſt reſurrection. For the ſtate of the Epheſians is for this purpoſe propoſed, that it may be a paterne of the condition of all other Chriſtians: *You hath he quickned that were dead in treſpaſſes and ſinnes*, Epheſ. 2. 1.

2 Secondlie, the prouidence and power of God doth ſhield them from the hurtfull ſword, which would bring them to an vntimely end. And they can at all times open heauen gates by the key of prayer, and haue acceſſe to God in all diſtreſſes. *Haman* was ſtored with riches, and aduanced to dignitie, and backed with great friends: and yet on a ſodaine with the turning of an hand, his life, and power, and whole eſtate was ouerturned. And *Mordecay* was a poore man, a captiue, maligned and condemned, and came ſo neere to the iawes of death, that after a ſort it breathed vpon him: yet being a righteous man, and crying to the Lord, he obtained a glorious deliuerance. *Iehoſaphat* ſeemed to be in as great perill as *Ahab*, and *Ahab* was of as great wealth as *Iehoſaphat*, yet God gaue direction to the hand of one archer, vnwittingly to ſhoote, and to the arrow to light vpon him, and to finde a chinke in his armor, and to hit him in ſuch a place, as thorow which it pearced to his life. And contrariwiſe hee perſwaded the hearts of manie others, who preſſed vpon *Iehoſaphat* to withdraw their hands, and to let him alone in ſafetie.

Thirdly, the death of Ieſus Chriſt hath ſo plucked out the ſting, and taken away the venome of their naturall death, as that it is conuerted into a quiet and comfortable reſt.

Fourthly, the Reſurrection of Ieſus Chriſt ſhall at the laſt day ſubdue and deſtroy this death, that now holdeth their bodies

dies in the graue, and death ſhall die, and they ſhall liue in immortalitie and euerlaſting bleſſednes.

Inſtruction to euery one to get a ſure poſſeſſion of ſound and vnfained righteouſneſſe, ſuch as will hold weight in the ballance of Gods righteouſneſſe, before his iudgement ſeate: and therefore let him obſerue theſe three generall rules which be effectuall and neceſſarie. First, that he put off the old man, with the carnall reaſon and ſhewes thereof: diſclaiming, for authentick and allowable goodnes, all counterfeit, naturall and ciuill vertues, and bee clothed with Chriſt and his merits, and ſanctified with his holy Spirit, Phil. 3. 9. 10. Secondly, that hee make a narrow ſearch to finde out all his ſinnes, and that with godly ſorrow and repentance for the ſame: obtaining alſo pardon and remiſſion for them, through the blood of Ieſus Chriſt. Thirdly, that he make a conſcience, conſtantly, and totally to walke in the commandements of God, endeuoring to pleaſe him in all things. For hee that leaueth off well dooing in the end, ſhall loſe all the comfort of his beginning. And he that is content to ſerue God but in a part, may bee ſuſpected to ſerue him ſoundly in no part. *Vſe* 1.

Conſolation to them that haue attained to this righteouſneſſe, and bee furniſhed with it, in heart and behauiour: they are thorowlie armed not onelie with the breſtplate, but with the whole and complete armour of God, againſt Satan and all his forces. And ſo likewiſe are they in ſafetie from the perill of all places; the violence of all perſons, and the terrors of all times and ſeaſons. When they are in health they neede not to feare ſickneſſe: when they are ſicke, they neede not to feare death: when they are to die, they neede not to dreade the danger of damnation. 2

Verſ. 3. *The Lord will not famiſh the ſoule of the righteous: but he caſteth away the ſubſtance of the wicked.*

THeſe words bee inferred vpon the former, as an anſwer to a ſecret obiection, that might be made againſt them: Why ſhould it bee thought that men get no good by gathering ri-

ches in what manner ſoeuer? They ſtand them in ſteade in time of dearth and ſcarſity; when others that want them, though neuer ſo iuſt, are like to periſh. Nowhere hee ſheweth the caſe to bee otherwiſe. Good men are not vnprouided of foode becauſe they are vnfurniſhed with wealth: and ſinfull men haue no aſſurance of prouiſion though they haue richeſt *for the Lord will not famiſh the ſoules of the righteous*, that is, will not ſuffer the men themſelues to ſtarue, though they haue neuer ſo little: *But will caſt away the ſubſtance of the wicked*, that is, hee will depriue them of the poſſeſſion, or vſe, or vertue of it when they are in greateſt neede.

Doct. A poore Chriſtian better then a rich worldling.

The Lord will not, &c.] Poore Chriſtians bee in better eſtate then wealthie wicked men, euen in reſpect of bodily prouiſion and maintenance. Such a compariſon is made, Pſalm. 34.10. that *Lions*, that is, mightie, ſtrong, and boyſterous men *ſuffer hunger, and ſuſtaine want* (as was notablie ſeene in the caſe of *Nabuchadnezzer*, who in the midſt of his greateſt power, his ample dominions, and large poſſeſſions, was yet turned a grazing like a beaſt, amongſt the beaſts): *But they that ſeeke the Lord ſhall want nothing that is good.* They may ſometimes bee without that which they wiſh for, becauſe they may wiſh for that which will not well agree with their ſafetie. But whatſoeuer is good, and their neede requireth it, that ſhall vndoubtedly be miniſtred vnto them.

Obiect. But may not a godly man die of hunger? ſhall wee condemne all that are affamiſhed?

Anſw. There is no doubt but manie men, euen faithfull ſeruants of God in ſieges, and extreame dearths &c. be brought to their ends, through penurie and want of food: but then it is good for them ſo to come to their end. The Lord doth call them home to heauen by ſuch a meſſenger. In the like ſenſe it is ſaid in the former Pſalm. 34.20. *That not one of their bones is broken*, that is, to their hurt, or through neglect of Gods prouident care ouer them. But one may haue his bones broken, and be hewed or ſawed aſunder, in great mercie, *Heb.* 11.37. So there is a promiſe to Gods people to preſerue them from the peſtilence, *Pſal.* 91.7. and yet many bleſſed ſaints bee taken away

away by it to euerlaſting glorie. Elſe *Dauid* would not haue giuen them that teſtimony, who ſo died at that time, calling them poore harmeleſſe ſheep; or haue offred himſelfe to that kind of death to preſerue them aliue. The meaning is then, that religious men ſhall neuer be plagued with the venome and ſting of ſcarcitie and famine, hauing it executed as a curſe vpon them; as it falleth out with ſinners.

Firſt, they haue the good prouidence of God continually for them: his eyes are open to ſee their neede, his eares are open to heare their prayers, his hand is open to relieue their neceſſities, his treaſurie and rich ſtore-houſe is open and able to ſupply all their wants. They haue his loue and fauour, they haue his power and ſufficiencie, they haue his word and promiſe, they haue his truth and fidelitie, that hee will neuer faile them, Heb. 13. 5. *Reaſon* 1.

Secondly, the wealthy miſers of the world haue the hand of God againſt them, to conſume that which they haue augmented, to ſcatter that which they haue gathered together, and to caſt away that as a curſed thing, which they haue laid vp as a precious treaſure. They truſt not in him, but make that their hope; and therefore hee will make that to deceiue them when they haue greateſt neede of helpe. They doubt not but it ſhall goe well with them, when others be in extreamitie; and therefore they ſhall bee brought into ſtraits, when it ſhall goe well with others. And ſo much the rather, becauſe they doe not onely glory in their wealth, and lift vp themſelues aboue poore Chriſtians; but arme themſelues therewith, and make it a weapon of oppreſſion. 2

Conſolation to good men that haue inward ſtore of grace, though their outward ſtate of money, or other ſubſtance bee very ſlender and ſmall: And though their friends ſhould alſo faile as well as their wealth, yet they bee neither deſtitute of friendſhip or welfare. Becauſe the Lord himſelfe is all-ſufficient in himſelfe, and moſt neerely vnited, and knit vnto them by the bond of fatherhood. The Prophet profeſſed and publiſhed his aſſurance to all the world, that hee *ſhould want nothing*; in this regard, that *God was his ſheepheard*. Pſal. 23. 1. And *Vſe* 1.

how can hee poſſibly then bee forlorne, that hath him to his father? Euen wicked men will be tender of their children, and the Beares and Dragons will bee carefull of their young ones: *Lament.* 4. 3. and ſhall the God of all goodneſſe withdraw his hand to helpe his ſonnes and daughters? eſpecially ſithence he reacheth it out to miniſter foode to euery liuing creature, and amongſt them to his very enemies? and from his owne kindneſſe, he can bow mens affections to be kinde, and make their very enemies friends, and friendly vnto them. And let that fall out that the times ſhould bee hard, and the prices of victuals high, yet Gods ſtore is not diminiſhed, nor his plenty abated; but he can afford his family ſufficient allowance, as well in the deareſt yeares, as when things bee at the cheapeſt. And then indeed his prouidence is moſt ſeene, and his goodneſſe moſt felt, and the truth of his word moſt cleerely manifeſted. For ſo he promiſeth, Pſal. 37. 19. *They ſhall not be confounded in the perilous times, and in the daies of famine they ſhall haue enough.* Whereof *Iacob* had experience in a ſpeciall maner: he neuer fared better then in the yeares of dearth: when all others wanted, he abounded: when the Egyptians themſelues that ſowed the corne were ready to periſh for want of corne, he with his houſhold was plenteouſly prouided for amongſt them, and that for nothing.

Terror for them whoſe whole happineſſe doth hang on their riches; though they be full now, they may quickely bee emptied: and though they ſeeme to want nothing, the curſe of God may ſpeedily bring them to bee deſtitute of euery thing. So did *Mary* ſing by the Spirit of God in her ſong of reioycing, Luke 1. 53. *He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath ſent empty away.* And ſo did *Hanna* alſo praiſe the Lord for the ſame, 1. Sam. 2. 5. *They that were full, are hired forth for bread, and the hungry are no more hired.* A great alteration was made in their ſtates on both ſides. The poore which laboured in other mens worke for wages, were ſufficiently prouided for at home, and the rich and wealthy which were maſters ouer many, were compelled by neede to frame themſelues to be other mens ſeruants.

Verſ. 4. *A deceitfull hand maketh poore: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.*

THis verſe alſo containeth an anſwer to an other obiection, which might riſe out of the wordes immediately going before. If food and maintenance be the giſt of God, and they that haue little ſhall be kept from want, & they that haue great ſtore ſhall be ſtript of all; to what end ſhould men trauaile and take paines? the wiſeſt way is to giue ouer all labour. Now this he refuteth by ſhewing the meanes whereby righteous men vſe to receiue this food and prouiſion from Gods hand, and that is by ſedulity and diligence in their vocations. And therefore he demonſtrateth the contrary effects of contrary men; namely, of ſlothfull perſons, and ſuch as bee induſtrious and paineſull. Slothfull perſons fall into two euils: the one is the practiſe of deceitfulneſſe, called here a deceitful hand: the other is the burthen of pouerty, which is a puniſhment inflicted vpon them both for fraud and idleneſſe. They that be diligent haue their reward yeelded vnto them, that they thriue and proſper by the labour of their hands: and though their wealth be not ſo great in quantity, yet the ſmalneſſe thereof is recompenſed in qualitie and good vſe of it; and therefore is called, *precious riches*, Chap. 12.27. And ſo they haue neither neede nor diſpoſition to giue themſelues to deceitfull ſhifts, as ſluggards.

A deceitfull hand, &c.] False dealing is no profitable trade to gaine by, it rather hurteth then helpeth them that vſe it. Tending to this purpoſe are many Parables in this booke: as Chap. 13.11. *The riches of vanitie ſhall bee diminiſhed:* they may be gotten, but not long kept, and though they periſh not, nor bee taken away all at once, yet they will conſume and bee waſted by degrees. And as this euent is heere declared to come vpon euill gotten goods; ſo in an other place hee telleth the miſerie that ſhall ouertake the men themſelues that ſo fiſh for them: Chap. 19.15. *A deceitfull perſon ſhall be affamiſhed.* As wealth will forſake them, ſo friends will faile them, and God will curſe them, and pouertie will oppreſſe them.

Doct. Guiles bring no gaine.

First,

Reasons. 1. First, the Lord doth hate and curse both deceit and deceiuers, as being abomination vnto him: and therefore his displeasure will kindle a fire in their estate to consume them.

2. Secondly, consider from whence very often this deceitfulnesse proceedeth: from idlenesse and remitnesse of men in their callings; as many texts do testifie, and the *Antithesis* especially and opposition in the two places before alleadged. Now if single slouthfulnes of it selfe will so eate vp a mans estate, as heereafter is to be shewed; much more when it hath such a companion to take part with it. And for experience hereof, looke vpon gamesters, and couseners, and shifters, and all such kind of people, and see whether their owne negligence and vniust courses, doe not like hungry and greedy beasts, deuour and swallow vp all their portions.

3. Thirdly, it is a righteous thing with God, so to requite them with penurie, that by fraud and falshood seeke to bring other men to it.

Vse 1. Instruction. If we be visited with beggery or needinesse, (the burthen of pouerty pressing vs so heauily that we cannot well beare it) let vs examine our owne courses, and call our waies to account, to see whether our owne fraud and guile haue not brought such a guest to our houses: and so doing, we shall turne the poison vnto a medicine, and that which is to others a iudgement, may bee to vs a singular mercy to draw vs to repentance, from such vnrighteous behauiour.

2. Secondly, we be yet spared from the stroak of God, that he hath not arrested our substance, being forfaited by falshood, nor depriued vs of the same. Let vs then speedily preuent the punishment by breaking off the sinne by repentance, by mercy, by reformation and restitution to the right owners, so far as possibly we shall be able.

3. Reproofe of their folly which hope to inrich themselues by deceit and wrongfull dealing, trusting to rise by that which bringeth others to a fall, and to turne that to a gaine, which is to others a losse. But by triall they shall bee taught, that they may as well looke to thriue by vnthriftinesse, as to increase their stocke by deceite, or profit themselues by rapine, and wrong.

wrong doing.

Obiect. But it appeareth, that their ſucceſſe is correſpondent to their expectation, the euent proueth that they make a gaine of it. The Prophet teſtifieth, that, *As a cage is full of birds, ſo their houſes are ful of deceit, and thereby they are become great, and waxen rich.* Ierem. 5. 27.

Anſwere. They may get things into their hands, and yet be preuented of the fruition of them. They may haue them for a time, and loſe them at the laſt, as the ſame Prophet alſo teacheth: *As the Patridge gathereth,* or *laieth egges, and hatcheth not: ſo he that getteth riches, and not by right, ſhall leaue them in the middeſt of his daies, and in the end die like a foole.* Ierem. 17. 11. They haue not a broode of comforts, ſo ſoone as they ſit vpon their neſt of riches, they may be troden vpon, or addle, or eaten vp. Euill may befall them before they can doe them any good; or if their goods remaine, themſelues may ſoone be remooued from their goods: and in the meane time haue the curſe of God on ſoule and bodie, which is much more grieuous, then to be ſmitten in outward eſtate.

But the hand of the diligent, &c.] They greatly help their owne eſtate that are painefull and faithfull in their vocations. Among many teſtimonies whereby this point is confirmed, that is to be noted which is in the thirteenth Chapter of this booke; *The ſoule of the diligent ſhall haue plentie,* or *bee made fat,* as the word ſignifieth. Where though by ſoule he vnderſtandeth the whole man, yet that part is not named in vaine. Their bodie and outward man ſhall haue enough, and the ſoule and inward man ſhall be content and ſatisfied with enough, and much refreſhed by it. *Doct.* A man faithfull in his calling betters his eſtate. Prou. 13. 4.

Firſt, it is appointed to man by the decree of God, not onely as a dutie to trauell and labour, but alſo as a portion *to eate his bread* thereby, and enioy the fruit of his labour, Gen. 3. 19. Pſalm. 128. 2. *Reaſon* 1.

Secondly, diligence and painefulneſſe is a ſeruice to God, and they that here haue the promiſe made to them, are ſuch as performe their works in conſcience, and obedience to his will, and therefore may well be aſſured of allowance to maintaine 2

them. As for ſuch as worke for the worlds ſake, in pride, and couetouſneſſe, or vpon coaction and neceſſitie, or for any other ſiniſter reſpect, they may bee ſaid to bee great doers that meddle in much dealing, but nothing diligent: and therefore it is no meruaile, though all their toile and trauell doe ſeldome take any good effect.

3 Thirdly, their paines and labours are for the common good, they ſerue for the vſe and profit of mankind, (for they that ſpinne the ſpiders web, and are more buſie then well occupied, are not to be counted in the number of theſe) and therefore ſhall not faile of the benefit of it themſelues.

4 Fourthly, faithfull imployment, and paines taking is a medicine againſt pride, and helpeth to worke humilitie, and therfore maketh readie the way for all good proſperitie.

5 Fiftly, by this meanes they are kept from vicious companions, and ſinfull exerciſes, and all kind of ſuch vnthrifty courſes, as whereby the ſtates of many men come to vtter ruine and ouerthrow.

Vſe. Inſtruction to all degrees from the higheſt that ſitteth on the throne, vnto the loweſt that clenſeth the chanels, or grindeth at the mil, that euery one attend with heedefulneſſe to the duties of his calling without remiſneſſe or negligence. Art thou great, and ſubſtantiall, as wee vſe to ſay? take this way to increaſe thy greatneſſe, and inlarge thy ſubſtance; and as the multitude of riches and titles doe not diminiſh thy liking and eſtimation of them, ſo let it not abate thy induſtrie and diligence in any ſeemely ſeruices. And thou which art poore, and of inferiour place, let it not repent thee to trauaile in works that others peraduenture would diſdaine to exerciſe, but proceede in hope, and know for thy comfort, that *in all labour there is abundance*, Chap.14.23. And albeit now thou art at the commandement of others, and according to their willes art wholly vſed in their workes, yet remember that *the hand of the diligent ſhall beare rule*, Chap.12.14. From a ſeruant thou maieſt grow to bee a maſter, from a labourer or hireling, thou maieſt attaine to bee an officer, and haue others at thy commandement. But whatſoeuer thy ſtate prooue to bee amongſt men,

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aſſure thy ſelfe of the reward of inheritance from God, *for thou ſerueſt the Lord Chriſt*: Col.3.24.

Verſ.5. *He that gathereth in ſummer is a ſonne of vnderſtanding: and he that ſleepeth in harueſt is a ſonne of confuſion.*

THe driſt of theſe words is to teach men to redeeme the time, and make the beſt aduantage of the ſeaſons, comparing opportunitie to ſummer or harueſt, when the fruits of the earth are ripe, and readie to be gathered; and the perſons to whom it is offered, to husbandmen that haue commodities growing in the fields. And therefore as we iudge him prudent which ſo ſtirreth himſelf, and haſteneth his people to cut down his corne, and to inne it when it is ripe, and the weather is ſeaſonable: ſo God here calleth him a ſonne of vnderſtanding that is, a wiſe man, which taketh time while time ſerueth, for anie good purpoſe and occaſion. And as the world crieth, fie on him that ſleepeth in harueſt, that is, doth no more labour or looke to his affaires, then if hee were in a dead ſleepe, and ſo ſuſtaineth the loſſe of all his croppe, by meanes whereof hee ouerthroweth the ſtate of all his familie: ſo the Lord termeth him a ſonne of confuſion, or which bringeth confuſion, that is to ſay, miſery and ſhame vpon himſelfe and his friends, which ſtriueth not to take his part of Gods bleſſing in due ſeaſon.

It is a matter of great importance to make our vſe of a good opportunitie when it is offered. The example of the *Ant* is to that end propoſed, Chap.6.6. that we might learne of the vnreaſonable creatures, and thoſe which are alſo of no account and reckoning. They are led onely by ſenſe, and inſtinct of nature; wee haue reaſon that may perſwade to it; they haue none to giue them admonition, or to call vpon them: we haue guides to direct vs, and the word of God ſeriouſlie inſtructing vs in the dutie. And that is there commended in them, which incomparablie will be more effectuall in Chriſtians: namelie, that wiſedome ſupplieth the defect of ſtrength, and prouidence effecteth that which other things cannot bring to paſſe by their power.

Doct. Opportunitie not to be omitted.

Examples hereof we haue in *Ioseph*, who in the time of great plentie, prouided against the yeeres of scarcitie: and in the Church of Antiochia, who being foretold of the famine to come, made prouision before hand for the Saints of Ierusalem.

Reas. 1. First, it is a thing pleasing to God, to accept of his gifts when his gratious hand doth reach them out vnto vs: and very offensiue to him when wee put by the fauour and kindnesse that he maketh offer of. For hee taketh it, either as a contempt of the things which he would bestow: or as a controlment of his wisedome; as though hee did not see farre enough into the fitnesse of euery season.

a Secondly, the euents that fall out on both sides doe make this manifest: they that open their hands to receiue, when God openeth his to giue, they that are prepared to accept with thankefulnesse, as he is readie to bestow in mercie, such shall haue the blessings of God confirmed vnto them with new blessings: and to them will hee communicate much and often, and that which is excellent, which giue speedie entertainment to his graces. But on the other side, when men hold him off with delaies, and grow nice and coye, and turne his benefits backe vpon him, they shall be soone rid of them, and stript of all his mercies: they shall call and crie at another time, and haue no answere, they shall search and seeke, and finde no successe, they shall feele their wants, and faile of supplie to relieue them.

Vse 1. Reproofe of them that be euill husbands for themselues, in the things of this present life, pretermitting the precious time of getting skill in any profitable trade or science, and onelie learne the art of vanitie, and bee many yeeres apprentices to dogs, and dice, and hawkes, and boules, and to euery ruffianlie companion, that shall teach them to swagger, and sweare, to swill, and quaffe, and play all the parts of professed Atheists. And so at last (their wits being worne out for want of wisedome, which would haue preserued them, their strength consumed in striuing to doe mischiefe, and age perishing in them as neuer yeelding fruit to themselues, or any others) they come

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to that condition as did the Vagabonds that *Iob* ſpeaketh of, that euery man will be readie to preferre his dogs before them (as in equitie it is fit for the maſter to take the better hand of the ſeruant) and to let his very dunghill haue preeminence aboue them. Their wretched and curſed courſes in miſſpending their time doe worke them the fulneſſe of woe and miſerie, and make them odious and hatefull to God and godly men, and to ciuill men, and burthenous and loathſome to vngodly and ſinfull men. Secondly, of them that be vnthriftie for their ſoules, which neuer applie themſelues to prepare for another life, before they be departing out of this. They doe not once thinke of ſeeking heauen and euerlaſting ſaluation, vntill they bee ſinking into hell and perpetuall perdition. They imagine that earthly things will require long labour to compaſſe them, but pietie, and grace, repentance, and faith, may be gotten in a moment: they be readie at their will, and their will will be flexible to their wiſh, and neither abilitie, nor will, nor wiſh will bee wanting at the time of their deaths. Oh miſerable men, how long will their eies be blinded! How long will their hearts be hardned! Doe they not perceiue that ſinne and Satan haue power ouer their affections and deſires, and purpoſes, and will, and all the faculties of their whole ſoules? Euen this maketh it cleare that it is ſo, becauſe they doe not perceiue it to bee ſo. And if their ſoules bee in ſuch bondage and ſubiection, and held at the wil of the diuel, that now in their freſh age & health (their ſenſes being more capable of inſtruction, and the miniſtery of the word readie to yeeld inſtruction) they cannot attaine to ſound and godly ſorrow, and conuerſion: let them not deceiue themſelues, as though in ſickneſſe, and paine, and dotage, and ſenſeleſneſſe, and affected blindnes of minde, they can by their owne diſpoſition returne ſincerely to the Lord.

Verſ.6. *Bleſſings are vpon the head of the righteous: but iniquity ſhall couer the mouth of the wicked.*

BLeſſings.] That is, all kind of happineſſe, euery good gift of God that is fit for them, as peace, plenty, grace, & health,

&c. All ſhall be vpon the head of the righteous: meaning vpon the whole ſoule and body of euery faithfull holy man. And they are ſaid to bee on the head, becauſe they come downe from aboue, and light as it were vpon the head, and ſo deſcend to the other parts. But iniquitie, the vengeance of God executed for violence and ſinne, ſhall couer the mouth of the wicked, ſhall take away all excuſes & defences from him. Now here is ſomewhat vnderſtood in the former clauſe, and expreſſed in the latter: and ſomewhat vnderſtood in the latter, and ſupplied in the former. Bleſſings are vpon the head of the righteous, and therefore doe open his mouth, *viz.* to praiſe God, and maintaine his owne innocency, and iudgements (called here violence or iniquity, by a *metonymie* of the cauſe) they are vpon the head of the wicked, and ſo cloſe vp their mouth.

Doct. 1. Bleſſednesse is the greatest gift of God to his seruants.

Bleſſings &c.] The greateſt reward that God doth giue to his ſeruants in this life, is to bleſſe them. That is very ordinary with the Prophets in the Pſalmes, and other places of Scripture, in wiſhing well to the Church, to pray for this, and in gratulations to commend it, and in thankfulneſſe to God to acknowledge it. As in the fift Pſalme, verſe 12. deſiring the comfort and ioy of faithfull men, and praying the Lord to worke it in them, he ſheweth what iuſt cauſe they had to be ſo affected: *For thou Lord* (ſaith he) *wilt bleſſe the righteous, and with fauour wilt compaſſe him as with a ſhield.*

Reaſ. 1. Firſt, ſuch bleſſings as are here ſpoken of, be ſure teſtimonies of Gods loue, and proceede meerely from his gracious goodneſſe: they are infallible pledges of his fauour; as it appeareth in the words of the Pſalme laſt quoted.

2 Secondly, they bee prerogatiues peculiarly appropriated to godly men: for ſaith he in an other place; *Saluation belongeth to the Lord, and thy bleſſing is vpon thy people.* It is alwaies accompanied with ſaluation: none are bleſſed but ſuch as are ſaued; and none are either bleſſed or ſaued, but ſuch as are the people of God.

3 Thirdly, they haue all good things infolded in them, which readilie according to our neede are miniſtred vnto vs: Deut. 28.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Gods bleſſings doe ſeaſon all proſperitie and the gifts that it bringeth, and maketh them comfortable; and all aduerſity, and maketh it profitable: whereas the curſe doth poiſon both to the wicked. 4

Inſtruction. That whereas we deſire to haue the Lord powre this heauenly gift vpon vs; ſo let vs obſerue the conditions that he doth preſcribe to them which ſhall receiue it. Let vs get holineſſe into our hearts, and bleſſings cannot chuſe but bee vpon our heads: let righteouſneſſe haue place in our actions and behauiour, and peace will haue force in our ſoules and bodies. *Vſe* 1.

Conſolation to all true hearted Chriſtians, that haue this bleſſed gift of Gods bleſſing. He that may truely be ſaid to poſſeſſe the bleſſing, cannot poſſibly ſay how much he doth poſſeſſe: The varietie of his treaſure is vnſpeakeable; his ſubſtance exceedeth all eſtimation; his inheritance is endleſſe, and without all bounds and limits. Though we ſhould be as much moleſted with malitious men as *Dauid* and *Paul* were, and as much aſſaulted by Satan and tried by Gods owne hand, with loſſes or bodily infirmities, as *Iob* was; yet if wee be bleſſed of God as they were, what cauſe can there be of feare, or griefe, or diſcontentment? The bleſſing bringeth ſtrength for ſupportance in them; the bleſſing bringeth iſſue and deliuerance out of them; the bleſſing worketh the right vſe of them; the bleſſing yeeldeth a plentifull reward of comfort, and good proſperitie in this life, and of glory and euerlaſting happineſſe in the life to come. 2

When God entreth into iudgement with wicked men, hee will cauſe the plague ſo to manifeſt their ſinnes, that they ſhall not bee able to denie them. Though hypocrites can make the greateſt ſhew, and vſually bee moſt forward to ſpeake for themſelues; yet when God found out the diſſembler in the Goſpell, and called him to a reckoning for intruding himſelfe to his feaſt without a wedding garment, he was ſtricken dumbe and ſpeechleſſe, he could plead nothing for himſelfe. *Haman* ſtanding onely before the miniſter of Gods vengeance, hauing been before that time his greateſt friend, yet when *Heſter* accuſed *Doct.* 2. Wicked mens ſin ſhall bring them to ſhame. Mat. 22. 12. Heſt. 7. 8.

cuſed him of his falſe and cruell practiſes, hee ſtood mute and could not reply. He that attempted to ſtop the mouth of *Mordecai*, had his own mouth ſtopped with his violence. And therefore when God himſelfe commeth to indite men, and to *ſet their ſinnes in order before them, all mouthes ſhall be ſtopped*, and *all the world ſhall be culpable before him*. No ſinfull and vnregenerate perſon, which hath no right to plead Chriſts merits, can poſſibly ſpeake any thing to iuſtifie himſelfe.

Pſal. 50. 21. Rom. 3. 19.

Reaſ. 1. Firſt, that the Lord may haue his words verified to bee all true and righteous, and his dealings alſo iuſt and holy: Pſalm. 51. 4. And for this cauſe, howſoeuer ſinfull men haue their mouthes ſhut vp at his iudgements, that they can ſay nothing for themſelues; yet he doth ſometimes open their mouthes, to draw out a confeſſion againſt themſelues; as in the caſe of *Iudas*, and *Pharao*, and *Adonibezek*, Matth. 27. 4. Exod. 9. 27 Iudg. 1. 7.

2 Secondly, in regard of the elect ſinners, that ſeeing the ſinne and puniſhment mixed together, and themſelues guiltie of the one, and worthy of the other, they may bee humbled and driuen to repentance. So were *Ioſephs* brethren frighted and brought to make this confeſſion; *What ſhall we ſpeake? and how ſhall we iuſtifie our ſelues? God hath found out the wickedneſſe of thy ſeruants*: Gen. 44. 16.

3 Thirdly, it maketh the torments of the reprobate to bee exceeding fearefull and terrible.

4 Fourthly, it is for admonition to others to take heed by their examples. This hath *Zachary*, chap. 1. 4, 5, 6, &c. *Be not like your fathers, that would not heare the former Prophets. Where are your fathers? Did not my words take hold of them? and they returned, and ſaid; As the Lord hath determined to doe vnto vs, according to our owne waies and works, ſo hath he done.*

5 Fiftly, for the ioy and comfort of Gods people, ſeeing the Lord vndertaking their cauſe, and executing his wrath vpon their enemies.

Vſe 1. Admonition, not to venture to commit ſuch ſinnes as wee can cloake and colour by denials, defences, excuſes, or extenuations; or if we haue that way faulted already, let vs ſpeede

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our confeſſion, leſt the Lord haſten his plagues to compell vs vnto it: or if wee will not be brought to acknowledge them our ſelues, the iudgements and curſes which hee will ſend forth, ſhall openlie publiſh and declare them. And therefore it is good to iudge our ſelues, that hee may ſpare vs: to open our mouthes for a free confeſſion, and to ſhut them from leſſening of our offences. So did *Iob*, Chap. 39. 37. *Behold, I am vile: what ſhall I anſwere thee? I will lay my hand vpon my mouth. Once haue I ſpoken, but I will anſwere no more: yea twiſe, but I will proceede no further.* And that grace doth God promiſe to his people by the Prophet *Ezechiel: I will eſtabliſh my couenant with thee, and thou ſhalt know that I am the Lord, that thou maiſt remember, and be aſhamed, and neuer open thy mouth any more: becauſe of thy ſhame, when I am pacified towards thee, for all that thou haſt done, ſaith the Lord God.* Exech. 16. 62. 63.

Verſ.7. *The memoriall of the iuſt ſhall be bleſſed: but the name of the wicked ſhall rotte.*

THis is one particular of the bleſſings mentioned in the former verſe, that that which is deareſt to a man, as his name, ſhall be in eſtimation, and good account. The remembrance and mention of him being abſent aliue, and when hee is dead, ſhall be acceptable, and with his praiſe and commendation: But the name of the wicked is curſed, and therefore had in hatred and deteſtation, euen as much loathed as the ſtinke of his carcaſe, that lieth rotting in the graue.

The credit and honour of good men will grow to bee better, and the reputation of ſinners will bee turned into ſhame. Onely godly men haue good names, and it is one difference that God putteth betweene them and the wicked, that they bee bleſſed herein peculiarlie, and all others excluded from the benefit of it. Such a threatning doth *Iſaias* denounce againſt the wicked: *Yee ſhall leaue your name as a curſe to my choſen: for the Lord God ſhall ſlay you, and call his ſeruants by a new name.* Though ſinfull men bee magnified of ſinners, yet they ſhall be made abominable to Saints, and that is the greateſt

Doct. Good men grow in credit: but ſinners glory ends in ſhame. Iſai. 65. 15.

reproch: and though good men bee deſpiſed of the world, yet God will giue them glorie, and increaſe it, and vouchſafe them the titles, not onely of his ſeruants, but euen of his owne children.

Reaſon 1. Firſt, they all, and none but they, are in credite with God and good men, and that onely is to be accounted true honour.

2 Secondly, the graces of ſound hearted Chriſtians will more and more appeare and ſhine out, and the ſecret ſinnes of hypocrites, and other cuill men will be diſcouered, and brought to light, and both ſorts ſhall haue eſtimation in time, according to their behauiour: which Saint *Paul* meaneth, when he ſaith, *That as ſome mens ſinnes are open before hand, and goe before vnto iudgement: ſo ſome other mens follow after. Likewiſe alſo that good workes are manifeſt before hand, and they that are otherwiſe cannot be hid*, 1. Tim. 5. 24. 25.

3 Thirdly, glory is an vnſeparable companion of goodneſſe: and ſo is ſhame of ſinne: for God hath ioyned them together, and therefore hee that hath one of them cannot bee without the other.

Vſe 1. Confutation of their error, that hope to become honourable and famous, and to leaue a name behind them, by fleſhly courſes: Some by getting much, and raiſing vp their houſes, and performing great exploits. But the vnhappie ſucceſſe of their vaine expectation is noted in the Pſalmes, that *though they thinke their houſes and habitations ſhall continue from generation to generation, and call the landes by their names, yet they ſhall not continue in honour, but periſh* like beaſts that die of the murraine. Who in all the world preuailed like to *Nebuchadnezzer*, in *Nebuchadnezzers* time? and yet howſoeuer he was applauded and admired at the firſt, hee was derided and exploded at the laſt, and made a prouerbe, and parable of reproch. Some by fine wit and policie, and dexteritie in ſpeaking. But let *Achitophel* and *Herod* be examples to theſe, the one in counſell was wonderfull deepe, and his ſpeeches were as oracles, and yet we repute him not to be a man of famous memory, but behold in him the very image and figure of infamie. The other for his eloquent oration was deified of the people, and

Pſalm. 49. 11. 12.

with

with a concordant acclamation extolled for a god; but yet as God laid a preſent ſtroke vpon his bodie, and deliuered his life into the power of baſe vermine, to gnaw out his bowels, ſo hee laid a continuall curſe vpon his name, which will cleaue vnto it for euer. Some others by hypocriſie, and pretence of mercie and pitie: and yet without all conſcience or loue of either. But praiſe ſo purchaſed, is ſubiect to ſtaines and loſſe of colour. The Phariſes had obtained the opinion of goodneſſe, godlineſſe, righteouſneſſe, and of all vertue. They were almoſt of al men, thought to be the moſt holy men: and can there be now a greater indignitie offered to a man, than to call him a Phariſee? for that name carrieth in it the perfect paterne of pride, hypocriſie, and palpable diſſimulation.

Conſolation to righteous men that God vndertaketh the protection of their names: it is not in the power of any creature to ſpoile them of their credit and reuerence: it is as ſurelie preſerued as their ſaluation: as their life is euerlaſting, ſo is the amiable remembrance of them. *The righteous*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt *ſhal be had in an euerlaſting remembrãce*. The Prophets and Apoſtles, and Chriſt himſelfe, and good men in their times were euill ſpoken of, and now haue a moſt bleſſed memoriall. And ſo of later yeeres, it was a great dignitie to bee a *Wolſey*, or a *Gardiner*, or others that were of great place, and cruell diſpoſition, but now wee reuerence the names of *Cranmer*, *Ridlie*, *Latimer*, *Hooper*, *Bradford*, and the meaneſt of them that ſuffered for the Goſpell of Chriſt, though they were then condemned for heretikes. The Apoſtle *Peter* encourageth vs to be bold and cheerefull *though wee ſhould bee railed vpon for Chriſt his ſake: for the Spirit of God is a Spirit of glorie*, and that is giuen to vs *and reſteth vpon vs*, and who ſhall remoue it from vs? *Nabothes* name was in great hazard to bee blemiſhed, when hee was conuicted, and executed for treaſon, and blaſphemie, and no meanes left in appearance, to cleare his innocencie: yet God knowing it, hath made vs to know it, and the ſhort ſhame that hee bare for a time, is turned to a durable honour through all generations.

2

Pſalm.112.6.

1.Pet.4.14.

Verſ. 8. *The wiſe in heart will receiue commandements: but the fooliſh in talke ſhall be beaten.*

The wiſe in heart, &c.] That is, ſuch as haue ſauing knowledge, and conſcience, *wil receiue commandements*, wil heare and obey the word of God without replies and cauils againſt it: *but the fooliſh in talke*, he that abuſeth his lips to murmuring and friuolous obiections, *ſhall be beaten*, that is, ſhal be plagued for his contempt.

The ſenſe will be plaine, if the ſupply be made in both clauſes of the oppoſition, in this manner: The wiſe in heart will readily receiue commandements, and therefore ſhall be rewarded: but the fooliſh in heart will bee fooliſh in talke to reiect commandements, therefore he ſhall be puniſhed.

Doct. Men muſt obey where God commands. Iames 1.19.

We ought to bee tractable to the will of God, without reſiſting or gainſaying. To this dutie Saint *Iames* doth admoniſh vs, ſaying: *Let euery man be ſwift to heare, and ſlow to ſpeake:* his meaning is not to perſwade men to come ſuddainly, and raſhly to the word without preparation: but to hearken deſirouſlie, with reuerence and attention when they are prepared, and not to picke quarels againſt that which is deliuered, vnaduiſedly and out of a diſtempered affection, but vpon mature deliberation with a mind willing to bee reſolued, to propoſe their doubts.

Reaſon 1. Firſt, the Lord hath abſolute authoritie ouer vs: and therefore he iuſtly may lay his commandements vpon vs.

2 Secondly, his whole will, and all his waies are perfectlie righteous: and therefore to take exception againſt them muſt needs be vnrighteous.

3 Thirdly, they are altogether full of wiſedome: and therefore none but fooles will preſume to charge them with folly.

Vſe 1. Inſtruction to caſt off and remooue away the ſinfull luſts of our harts, the fleſhly diſcourſe of carnal reaſon, and the reſolute and ſetled purpoſe of any wicked way. For al theſe wil imbitter the ſoule, and whet the tongue to withſtand and reſiſt the holie commandements of God: Iam. 1.21. 1. Pet. 2.1. Ier. 44.16.17.

Reproofe

Reproofe of them that are willing to receiue the promiſes of God, but not the Commandements: or if they doe, it is in ſuch things as bee agreeable to their owne will, or at leaſt not contrary to it. So they dealt with *Ieremiah*, intreating him to declare vnto them all that the Lord ſhould ſay, and they would doe it; and they would haue bin as good as their word, if he had incouraged them to take their voyage into Egypt, whether they were bent to goe: but when he diſſwaded them from it by expreſſe prohibition and threatnings, they grew to another point; that it was not God which ſpake that, but *Ieremie*; and *Ieremie* did not ſpeake truely, but falſly; and it was not of himſelfe, but from *Baruch*; and *Baruch* had no good meaning in it, but to deliuer them into the hands of the Caldeans to be ſlaine, or carried away captiues: Ier.43.2,3. 2 Ier.42.10.

Conſolation for them that ſubmit themſelues to learne and obey the doctrine of Gods wil, though it many times doe croſſe them in their affections and deſires, in their reaſon and conceits, in their pleaſures and delights, in their profits and commodities: this manifeſteth true wiſedome, this declareth a faithfull heart, this giueth a cleere teſtimony of ſinceritie. The rich yong man attained not to this; nor *Herod* went ſo farre: though he did many things by *Iohns* perſwaſion, yet hee would not conforme himſelfe as to the will of God, to doe euery thing, or to leaue euery thing according as hee required: Matth.19.22. Marke 6. 17.18,20. 3

Terrour for the braue gallants of our age which exerciſe their ripe heads and freſh wits in wreſtling with the trueth of God, and take it for a glory to giue it a foyle. But howſoeuer their prompt wits, and ready tongues, together with art and Satans aſſiſtance, may ſometimes perplexe and trouble a poore Chriſtian, yet ſhall they nothing preuaile againſt Chriſt and his verity, nor gaine any thing at his hands, but ſhame and puniſhment. It were ſafer for them to incounter with tenne *Samſons*, then to trie their manhood with one point or article of Gods holy doctrine. But their caſe is worſt of all, which obſtinately, peruerſely, and of wilfull malice doe reiect all that is taught them out of the word. It is in vaine to admoniſh them, 4

as the Prophet ſaith, Hoſ. 4. 4. *Thy people are as they that rebuke the Prieſt*: that is, preſumptuous perſons, ſinning with an high hand, in refuſing to heare, or be directed by the Prieſt, the of the law; Deut. 17. 12. or to giue eare to the Miniſters of the Goſpel now: but contentiouſly diſobey the truth, & ſo bring *vpon their own ſoules indignation & wrath, tribulation and anguiſh*. Rom. 2. 9.

Verſ. 9. *He that walketh vprightly, walketh boldly: but hee that perverteth his waies ſhall be knowne.*

HE *that walketh vprightly.*] That is, doth carefully looke to his waies with an honeſt heart: *walketh ſurely*; hauing both the affection, and ground, and effects of Chriſtian boldneſſe: *but he that perverteth his waies*: that is, doth allow himſelfe in any courſe, though neuer ſo ſecretly: *ſhall bee knowen*; his ſinnes ſhall be detected.

The ſenſe of the whole verſe may be thus expreſſed: *He that walketh vprightly, walketh ſurely*; becauſe his faithfulneſſe ſhall be knowne to his praiſe: *And hee that perverteth his waies, walketh dangerouſly*; becauſe his leaudneſſe ſhall be knowne to his ſhame.

Doct. All ſound ſafety and boldneſſe proceedeth from ſinceritie of heart, and integritie of life. Euery religious man that feareth the Lord, hath this promiſe, Pſal. 112. 7, 8. *That no euill tidings ſhall make him afraid, becauſe he beleeueth in the Lord.* If all the world would tell him of perill, when God himſelfe doth warrant him ſafetie, he will giue moſt credit to him that hath moſt truth, and moſt power alſo to diſpoſe of all euents. And his heart is not as a pole that is pitched vp, or a ſtake that is ſticked vp, which euerie hand may plucke awry, or euery blaſt of wind may blowe downe; nor like a dry wall without a quoine or buttreſſe, or any other binding to fortifie it: but it is fixed and eſtabliſhed as a tree that is well rooted, and groweth ſtrongly, or a building that hath a ſure foundation, and ſtandeth faſt, and ſo is freed from feare and all ſlauiſh terror.

He liues ſafely, that liues ſincerely.

Reaſon 1. Firſt, his heart hath Gods owne eye to behold it, and his Spirit to teſtifie the faithfulneſſe of it, and ſo receiueth comfort from

from him, as *Iob* did, when in the confidence of his cauſe and conſcience he ſaith; *O that I had ſome to heare me: behold my ſigne, that the Almightie will witneſſe for me, though mine aduerſary ſhould write a booke againſt me.* Whereas contrariwiſe, the hearts of hypocrites, being ſearched by him, are found moſt fraudulent and deceitfull. Iob 31.35.

Secondly, the courſe of their actions is ſuch as will endure light, and the more they are examined, the better they will proue, and therefore they neede not feare any might or malice, or cunning aduerſaries that ſhall ſeeke their diſgrace. And vpon the aſſurance of this the Prophet profeſſeth his vndaunted courage and magnanimitie, with challenge alſo to his calumniant enemie whoſoeuer he were: *I haue ſet my face like a flint, and I know that I ſhall not be aſhamed. He is neere that iuſtifieth me, who will contend with me? let vs ſtand together: who is mine aduerſary? let him come neere to me.* And though their enemies for a time do falſly ſlander them, yet the Lord in due ſeaſon *will make their righteouſneſſe as cleere as the noone day.* Pſal.37.6. 2 Iſa.50.7,8.

Thirdly, their bodies and ſtate are in Gods cuſtodie, and hee hath vndertaken the defence and preſeruation of them; as hee promiſeth, Chap.3.26. *The Lord ſhall be for thine aſſurance, and ſhall preſerue thy foote from taking.* Whereas the wicked are out of Gods protection, and goe perpetually in perill. 3

Fourthly, their ſoules are prepared for death and the iudgement ſeate of Chriſt, and therefore more deſire to be diſſolued, then are afraid to here of the neereneſſe of their diſſolution: which is contrary in the wicked, *who all their daies are in bondage to the feare of death and damnation.* Heb.2.15. 4

Inſtruction to get apparent and euident teſtimonies of vprightneſſe, which will make our liues comfortable, and keepe off many miſerable vexations and horrors that come vpon the wicked. And this wee ſhall doe, if wee labour to know all that God would haue vs to learne, and to indeuor to practiſe all that we know, and confeſſe to God all that wee faile to practiſe: for ſo farre as we are willingly ignorant of any duetie, or careleſſe to performe it, or ſecure when wee neglect it, and conceale our ſinnes, not acknowledging them that the Lord may remit them, *Vſe* 1. Pſal.32.1,3.

them, ſo farre we come ſhort of a good conſcience.

2 Conſolation for all that be vpright, that whether they walke abroad, or ſtay at home; whether they bee in company with others, or alone by themſelues; whether it be in the day, or in the night; whether they be waking, or ſleeping; they are well aſſured of certaine ſafetie.

3 Terrour for ſinfull men, whoſe conſciences bee at all times readie to aſſaile them. Naturall courage will not helpe them in the time of extremity. How many ſeeming very valiant, as *Saul* for example, haue through deſperate feare, laid violent hands vpon their owne bodies? And let power and courage concurre together, yet both will be inſufficient to ſtrengthen a heart that Gods iudgement and their owne guiltineſſe doe weaken. As *Balſhazzer* being bold to defie *Cyrus*, and to bidde battell to the Lord himſelfe, prophaning his holy veſſels in deſpight of him: yet now in the middeſt of iollitie, amongſt his friends in his owne houſe, in a ſtrong Citie guarded with an hoſt of armed ſouldiers, hee was ſo frighted and terrified, that his countenance was changed, his heart was reſolued into daſtardlineſſe, the ioynts of his loynes were looſed, and his knees ſmote one againſt another. And what was it that ſo daunted him? the ſight of an hand writing vpon the wall. There were neither more enemies, nor fewer friends, nor any other alteration then before: but God wakened his conſcience, and his conſcience ſhewed him his guiltineſſe, and all together threatned his deſtruction; and hereby his great courage was ſo quickly killed. And this alſo may ſerue to take away the vaine confidence of fooliſh men that bee bold to commit iniquitie, and yet looke to eſcape the reproach of it: hoping neuer to be found out. But they forget that the Apoſtle ſaith, 1. Tim. 5. 24, 25. that mens ſinnes come to light in diuers maners, ſome preſently vpon the fact, ſome long after, ſome in their life time, ſome after they be dead, ſome reſerued to the laſt day; but ſo, that all ſhall certainely be manifeſted one day. *Caine* had as faire poſſibilitie and likelihood to couer his crueltie, as euer any ſinner had, or poſſibly can haue to conceale his offences, no man but himſelfe knowing of it, no circumſtances being to ſift it out by,

by, if hee would keepe his owne counſell; and yet what fact almoſt is more notoriouſlie knowne and publiſhed, and that with deteſtation, then his murdering of *Abel?* And it is not to be imputed to his owne ſillineſſe, or careleſneſſe of his name and credit, as though negligentlie hee had diſcouered it himſelfe; for he would haue hid it from the Lord, and conſequentlie from all men, if he could haue ſo carried the matter.

Verſ. 10. *Hee that winketh with the eye worketh ſorrow: and he that is fooliſh in talke ſhall be beaten.*

THis confirmeth the latter clauſe of the former verſe, That they that peruert their waies ſhall be knowne, though they doe it neuer ſo ſecretly, which is meant by the winking of the eie. Yet by this it ſhall appeare that it is knowne, becauſe it ſhall bee puniſhed. For as they practiſe miſchiefe againſt others, and many times worke them ſorrow: ſo they certainelie bring miſchiefe on their owne heads, and procure ſorrow to their owne ſoules. And yet all winking is not condemned: but that which tendeth to hurt, when men winke wiles. The Apoſtle beckned or winked at *Iohn* that he ſhould aske who it was that ſhould betray Chriſt, and yet this was well done of him; for he ſhewed a reuerend regard of Chriſt, that he would not bee loud and audacious in his preſence. If they peruert their waies openlie by beeing fooliſh in ſpeech, open iudgement ſhall be executed vpon them for their open ſinnes, and thereby their mouthes ſhall be ſtopped. Ioh. 13. 24.

It is not ſafe to vſe any member of the bodie, or any geſture though neuer ſo cloſelie, to commit ſinne. The ſonnes of *Belial*, vnthriftie perſons, are ſo deſcribed by their behauiour and threatned to bee puniſhed: Chap. 6. 12. 13. 14. 15. *He walketh with a froward mouth, hee maketh a ſigne with his eies, hee ſignifieth with his feete, hee inſtructeth with his fingers, &c. Therefore ſhall his deſtruction come ſpeedily: hee ſhall bee deſtroyed ſuddenlie without recouerie.* *Doct.* Sinne muſt haue no allowance.

They are markes and meſſengers of a ſinfull heart within, as in the ſame Chapter, verſ. 14. *Leaud things are in his heart, he imagineth euill at all times.* *Reaſons* 1.

2 Secondly, great hurt is done by ſuch geſtures and ſpeeches and other like behauiour.

3 Thirdlie, the members of our bodies, as eies, and tongue, and ſuch like, were created for the ſeruice of God, and are required to bee *weapons of righteouſneſſe* againſt ſinne, and not of ſinne, againſt God and his righteouſneſſe: Rom.6.19.

Vſe 1. To looke well to euery one of them, that none of them bee in pay with Satan, or luſt, or malice, to fight the battailes of the fleſh, againſt the word and ſpirit of God. The Lord forbiddeth to *ſet a foote towards the breach of the Sabbath:* or *to ſmite with the fiſt of wickedneſſe,* or *to lift vp a finger to crueltie or hard dealing:* Iſai.58.4.9.13.

2 Terror for them that haue the members of their bodies as armed rebels againſt the Lord, all following a ſinfull heart which is their captaine and leader.

3 Conſolation to the ſeruants of God, that the Lord beholdeth euerie looke of the wicked aduerſaries, euery becke, euerie nod, and all their plots and practiſes, and therefore euerie one ſhall be fruſtrate and defeated. And ſo the the Lord heareth the boaſts and inſultations, the threatnings and ſlaunders, and all kind of hurtfull calumniations, that are breached out againſt his people, hee will take their cauſe in hand, and thoſe virulent tongues that haue beaten others with falſe accuſations, and lies, ſhall be beaten themſelues with the rod of his vengeance; and the innocencie of the righteous ſhall bee cleared by the puniſhment inflicted vpon their enemies.

Verſ.11. *The mouth of of a righteous man is a welſpring of life: but iniquitie couereth the mouth of the wicked.*

IN Iſrael, and in the countries bordering vpon it, it was a great benefit to haue wels of water, both for the vſe of men and of the cattle, and therefore things of great account be many times compared to them in the Scriptures, and here the mouth of a righteous man is ſo called in a double reſpect, both for the conſtancie of good conference (according to the ſimilitude, for ſuch ſprings as were continuall, and would hold out

as

as well in ſommer as in winter, were ſaid to be wels of liuing water: Gen.26.19. as alſo, and eſpecially for the good effect, that they be inſtruments ſometimes to beget, & vſually to confirme and refreſh the life of the ſoule. The latter part of the verſe hath been expounded in the fixt verſe.

The expoſition ſtandeth thus: The mouth of a righteous man doth alwaies flow with wholeſome words; and therefore ſhall bee continued open with bleſſings: But the mouth of a wicked man doth alwaies flow with hurtfull words: and therefore ſhall be ſtopped with violence.

The mouth of the righteous, &c.] A good man is neuer barren of good ſpeeches. It is giuen as a precept by the Apoſtle to the Coloſſians, 4.6. that their ſpeech ſhould bee alwaies gracious, and poudred with ſalt, that is, holy and wholeſome for the matter, and diſcreete and ſeaſonable for the manner, which is not onely a commandement deliuered by God, as a thing that ought to bee: but a duetie in exerciſe and practiſe with all godly Chriſtians. *Doct.* Good men haue euer good words.

Firſt, the law of the Lord is in their heart, and therefore they cannot chooſe but talke and conferre of it: Pſalm.37.30.31. *Reaſons* 1

Secondly, their loue to God and the conſcience of their dutie conſtraineth them to praiſe him for his word and nature, and workes: and to make his glorie appeare vnto others. 2

Thirdly, they vſe it as a meanes to refreſh their owne hearts, and to procure helpe by prayer, and ſuch other exerciſes, for the ſupplie of all their wants of ſoule and bodie. 3

Fourthly, their loue to their brother, and deſire to haue men brought to euerlaſting life, doth ſtirre them to teach and exhort, to rebuke and admoniſh, to comfort and encourage, and euery way to helpe them to ſaluation. 4

Confutation of them who aſcribe the abilitie of conference and prayer wholly to men of wit and learning, that therefore they can ſay nothing becauſe their education hath not been in ſuch exerciſes, it belongeth to Preachers and Miniſters. But the holy Ghoſt doth impute it to righteouſneſſe heere, and to the efficacie and power of the ſpirit. Zach.12.10. *I will powre vpon the houſe of Dauid, and on the inhabitants of Ieruſalem the* *Vſe* 1.

ſpirit of grace and prayer. Hee ſaith not they ſhall attaine vnto the art and method of prayer, which carnall men may get by carnall meanes, in the earth: but it is a bleſſing powred downe from aboue, as a gift from heauen, which onely his owne children haue aſcending vpon them, and all his people bee repleniſhed with it. It was not promiſed onely to the Prieſts, and Leuites, and Prophets, but to the houſe of *Dauid*, as in former times it had been on *Dauids* owne perſon: and to the inhabitants of Ieruſalem, as well as to the houſe of *Dauid*. He that ſaith expreſly that he cannot pray, ſaith alſo by conſequence that he is not righteous, nor yet in caſe to be ſaued. And hee that wanteth will and abilitie to talke Chriſtianlie, doth proclaime by ſilence, that hee hath not the ſpirit of faith. For the holy Ghoſt hath not loſt that vertue now, which he was wonted to worke in *Dauids* time, and in *Paules*, who thus teſtifie of themſelues, and of all other ſound hearted Chriſtians; *Becauſe we haue the ſame ſpirit of faith, according as it is written, I beleeued, and therefore haue I ſpoken, we alſo beleeue, and therefore ſpeake*, 2.Cor.4.13. More ſhall be ſpoken of this point in the 13. chapter, 14. verſe.

Verſ.12. *Hatred ſtirreth vp contentions: but loue couereth all treſpaſſes.*

HAtred: and all vncharitable affections, as enuie and wrath, *ſtirreth vp ſtrife*: worketh all kinde of reuenge and miſchiefe, as backbiting, vpbraiding with former faults, and very often procureth iniuſt criminations. *But loue couereth all treſpaſſes*: by forgiuing them and reproouing them in friendly manner, and by concealing them from all thoſe, to whom the knowledge of them hath not come, or doth not appertaine. The oppoſition is thus framed, Hatred ſtirreth vp contentions, and blazeth abroad mens infirmities, but loue ſeeketh peace, and couereth all treſpaſſes.

Doct. An ill heart raiſeth contention.

Hatred.] The actions and ſpeeches of men are not ſo much a cauſe of ſtriſe and debate, as the euill affections of their hearts. Diuers time it falleth out that the wrong doer is not ſo much faultie.

faultie as hee that ſhould better beare it: and no iniuries could worke a quarrelous contention, vnleſſe there were a defect of loue on both ſides. It is ſaid, Chap. 18.6. *That a fooles lips come with ſtriſe.* It is not the occaſion giuen, ſo much as the lips that make the breach: and the lips could not doe it, vnleſſe the man ſet them on worke; & the man would not ſo ſet them on worke, vnleſſe folly and ſinne ouerruled both him and his lippes. So Chap. 15.18. angry men are brought in for the authors of ſtriſe; but he that is ſlow to wrath, hath this teſtimony giuen him, that he will appeaſe it. What was the reaſon why *Ioſephs* brethren had ſuch a quarrell at him? Becauſe they ſaw their father loue him more then all the reſt, they hated him, and could not ſpeak peaceably to him: Gen. 37.4. What moued *Ahab* to be alway ſo bitter againſt *Eliah* and *Michaiah*? He telleth the cauſe himſelfe; he hated them, and reputed them to be his enemies: 1. Kin. 21.20. and 22.8.

Firſt, whereſoeuer hatred is, and one man maligneth another, there is pride; and *onely by pride contentions come:* Chap. 13.10. *Reaſ.* 1.

Secondly, if ſtriſe did not more proceede from the inward corruptions, then the outward occaſions, they that were moſt wronged, ſhould neceſſarily be moſt contentious; and ſo *Moſes*, and *Dauid*, and *Ieremy*, and *Paul*, and Ieſus Chriſt himſelfe of all other, ſhould haue been moſt vnquiet and clamorous. But theſe had neuer any equall vnto them for peaceable and gentle behauiour: Numb. 12.2, 3. Matth. 12.19. 1. Pet. 4.23. 2

Confutation of them that lay the blame of their froward-neſſe vpon the vnkindneſſe of their neighbours: and eſpecially of ſuch as charge the miniſterie of the word, and the Preachers of it, with all the ſchiſmes and ſeditions, and with all the breaches and diuiſions that are in the Church. They publiſh the Goſpell of grace, which teacheth peace, and maketh peace betweene God and man, and betweene man and man, yea a man and his owne conſcience. But would there bee ſo great oppoſitions, ſay they, and themſelues and their doctrine ſo much croſſed and reſiſted, vnleſſe the cauſe were in them? They be troubleſome men, and buſie bodies, giuen to faction, *Vſe* 1.

and no man can liue in peace by them. The Diuell cannot liue in quiet by them, and therefore hee maketh a tempeſt in their hearts whom he poſſeſſeth; and ſo their waues daſh againſt the Miniſters and all other good Chriſtians. Our Sauiour knew that ſuch would bee the ſucceſſe of his Goſpell; that wicked men would be in as great a hurly burly at it, as if hee had come with fire and ſword againſt them. *Ieremy* cleareth himſelfe of all priuate occaſions of diſcontentment amongſt the people; hee neither borrowed on vſury, nor lent on vſury, nor had any trafficke or dealing with them: yet all contended againſt him, and euery man curſed him. But what moued them to ſuch paſſion and diſtemper? the Diuell and their own ſinfull hearts; which the Prophet ſo mightily warred againſt.

Mat. 10. 34.

2 Inſtruction. If our hearts riſe againſt our brethren, and begin to grow turbulent and vnpeaceable, that then wee call them to examination: as St. *Iames* doth them that would examine themſelues: from whence are theſe wars and contentions? are they not from luſts that fight in the members?

Iames 4. 1.

3 Not to truſt enuious perſons, (for they haue not the gouernment of themſelues) though they ſpeake faire, and offer reconciliation: yet if they cleanſe not their ſoules of their inward rancour of malice, and that by repentance, they will breake out againe into bitterneſſe; as *Saul* did againſt *Dauid*.

But loue couereth, &c.] Chriſtian loue doth cauſe men to bee mercifull to the ſoules and names of their brethren: which thing Saint *Peter* teacheth, alleadging almoſt the very ſame words of this Scripture: *Aboue all things haue feruent loue amongſt you: for loue couereth a multitude of ſinnes*. It hideth them all, though there be neuer ſo many.

Doct. Loue is the leaſt fault finder.

1. Pet 4. 8.

Reaſ. 1. None haue this loue but ſuch as haue felt Gods loue to themſelues, remitting and couering their owne ſinnes: and that maketh them mercifull to others.

And by that argument the Colloſſians are perſwaded to that duety, *that they ſhould forbeare one another, and forgiue one another, if any man haue a quarrell to another: euen as Chriſt forgaue them, ſo ſhould they doe*. Col. 3. 13.

2 Secondly, they eſteeme their brethren as their owne fleſh, and

and members of the ſame body: and therefore will not willingly diſcouer the deformities, or vlcers, or the naked or vncomely parts thereof.

Thirdly, they propoſe a copie or patterne to themſelues, how themſelues would bee dealt with in the like caſe; according to the rule of our Sauiour, and the ſumme of the law and Prophets. 3 Math.7.12.

Inſtruction to performe this dutie with faithfulneſſe and good diſcretion to our neighbours. First, let vs take doubtfull things in the beſt part; for loue is not ſuſpicious, but hopeth well of things that may haue good conſtruction, and peruerteth them not to the worſt ſenſe. So wee deale with our children in their diſtempers, imputing them to ſome griping with wind, or breeding of teeth, or that ſome pinne pricketh them: it is meere neceſſitie that driueth vs to ſee their frowardneſſe. Secondly, though it be a fault, yet if it be a ſmall infirmitie, and eſpecially if it be a priuate wrong vnto our ſelues, let vs paſſe by it, as the Lord doth moſt gratiouſly with vs, whoſe children we muſt herein declare our ſelues to be, in imitating of him: and it is a mans honour to paſſe by an offence. Thirdly, if there bee an offence committed fit to be reproued, let vs vſe all holy lenitie, if it may preuale, or ſeueritie in compaſſion to draw them out of their ſinnes; for that is the beſt couering to bring them to repentance, that their iniquities may bee couered from Gods eyes, and waſhed away for euer. So did *Nathan* helpe to couer *Dauids* ſinnes, and was the beſt inſtrument of his clearing, by his free and faithfull diſcouerie of them. Fourthly, if it belong not to our place to giue them admonition, or they receiue it not at our hands; then let vs ſhew their diſeaſes to more skilfull Phyſitians, and their wounds to better Surgeons, as *Ioſeph* told his father of his brethrens infamie: Gen. 37.2. 1.11. and the houſe of *Cloe* ſhewed *Paul* of the diſſenſions of the Corinthians. *Vſe* 1. Eph.5.12. Prou.10.3. Iob.23.17. Iames 5.20. 1.Cor. 1.11. 1.Cor.1.11.

Reproofe of them that take it for their owne honour to bring others vnto diſgrace, they thinke that the blackeneſſe of their brethren wil make them white. When they haue no goodneſſe in themſelues to helpe their credit, they goe about to dig

dig it out of the dunghill of their neighbours corruptions.

Conſolation to the ſeruants of God, that if the weake loue of creatures, that haue in them ſo great defect of loue and proneneſſe to hatred, be of ſuch force as to hide their ſinnes, which be further from them; how much more ſhall the infinite loue of God couer all their ſinnes that are ſo neere vnto him? No man in his beſt loue to his beſt friend, can either forgiue ſinne, or worke repentance that ſinne may bee forgiuen: But God can performe both, and hath beſtowed vpon vs his Sonne; and his Sonne hath beſtowed vpon vs his life and blood to effect both.

Verſ. 13. *In the lips of him that hath vnderſtanding, wiſdome is found: but a rod ſhall be for the backe of him that is deſtitute of vnderſtanding.*

THeſe words neede no further explanation, then the ſupply of that which is to be vnderſtood in both the clauſes. For this ſeemeth to bee the ſenſe of them: In the lips or ſpeech of him that hath vnderſtanding wiſedome is found, which keepeth iudgements and puniſhments from him: but in the lips of him that wanteth vnderſtanding, folly is found; which bringeth iudgements and puniſhmet vpon him. The firſt hemiſtich, or former part of the verſe, is the ſame ſimply ſet downe, and without allegory or metaphore, as was comparatiuely vttered in the eleuenth verſe, by the ſimilitude of a wel-ſpring.

The latter part is the ſame in ſenſe that was in the eight and tenth verſes: for there it is ſaid; that *the fooliſh in talke ſhall be beaten.*

Verſ. 14. *Wiſe men lay vp knowledge: but the mouth of the foole is a preſent deſtruction.*

HEre is declared by what meanes wiſe men attaine to that abilitie and ſufficiencie of fruitfull ſpeeches, by due attention to that which is ſpoken to them, or which they reade: or by diligent obſeruation of things which they behold. Thoſe they

lay

lay vp, as a man would his treaſure, in a ſafe place. As therefore a prouident thriftie husband, which hath gathered together a ſtocke, will bee readie vpon ſhort warning to make a purchaſe, or vpon any good occaſion to disburſe a ſumme of monie: ſo hee that is faithfull in ſeeking knowledge, and applieth both heart and memorie to hold it faſt, and keepe it, ſhall readily in conuenient time draw out the good things which hee hath learned, either for his owne vſe, or the benefit and profit of others. Which is contrary in careleſſe and heedleſſe perſons: for they will bee as forward to ſpeake as any others; but that which is within the heart, will quickly bee at hand to come out at the lips, and that is poiſon, and venome, and peſtilent matter, which will certainly hurt themſelues, and be dangerous to others. So then thus ſtandeth the oppoſition: wiſe men lay vp knowledge, and therefore their mouthes are a preſent preſeruation: but fooliſh men reiect knowledge; and therefore their mouthes are a preſent deſtruction.

Wiſe men, &c.] It is not enough to bring the eare to heare holie inſtructions, but the heart muſt alſo receiue and keepe them. The neceſſitie of this dutie appeareth by the ſerious exhortation which he giueth to that purpoſe in the beginning of the ſeuenth Chapter: *My Sonne keepe my words, and hide my commandements with thee: keepe my commandements, and thou ſhalt liue, and mine inſtruction as the apple of thine eies.* Hee giueth this counſell as a friend, to a neere friend, as a father to his owne ſonne; for the matter of it is not of ſmall importance, but of the greateſt weight and moment, it behoueth men not onelie to lay ſure hold of holy doctrines in regard of ſtate, but of their very liues. And therefore not to looke to the ſafe keeping thereof as we are chatie of our monie, but to be as prouident that we be not ſpoiled of them, as wee are watchfull to preſerue the members, yea the deareſt members of our bodies from violence. *Doct. 1.* What good the eare laieth in, that the heart muſt lay vp.

First, the excellencie of wiſedome and ſauing knowledge may allure vs vnto it: for it is more precious and profitable then all earthly treaſures, which earthly minded men horde vp ſo carefully. *Reaſon 1.*

For the merchandize thereof is better then the merchandize of ſilver, and the gaine thereof is better then gold. It is more pretious then pearles: and all things that thou canſt deſire, are not to be compared vnto her: Prou. 3. 14. 15.

2 Secondly, it concerneth our ſaluation, and euerlaſting happines, faithfully to retaine the holy word of God in our ſoules.

And therefore it is ſaid to the Hebrewes, *How ſhall we eſcape, if we neglect ſo great ſaluation, which at the firſt began to bee preached by the Lord, and afterward was confirmed to vs by them that heard him:* Heb. 2. 3.

3 Thirdly, the ſtore of grace that is congeſted doth miniſter matter, and opportunitie, and readineſſe of good and wholeſome ſpeeches to the lips.

For, that reaſon the Prophet yeeldeth; Pſal. 49. 3. 4. *My mouth ſhall ſpeake of wiſedome, and the meditation of my heart is of knowledge, I will inclins mine eare to a parable,* &c.

4 Fourthly, by this meanes: men are in their whole liues both framed to be good, and declared to bee good, and deliuered from all ſinfull courſes, that they may continue to bee good.

Pſalm. 119. 11. As hee profeſſeth in the Pſalme. *I haue hid thy promiſe in mine heart, that I might not ſinne againſt thee.*

According to that alſo in the ſecond chapter of this booke, Verſ. 10. 11. *When wiſedome entreth into thine heart, and knowledge delighteth thy ſoule, then ſhal counſell preſerue thee, and vnderſtanding ſhall keepe thee.*

And in this point the good ground, in the Goſpell, hath the preheminence aboue all the others, it receiueth the word, and giueth entertainement vnto it by attention, and ſo it goeth beyond the high way. Secondly, it hath a roote in it ſelfe, whereby it maketh a bold profeſſion in the time of perſecution, and ſo it goeth beyond the ſtonie ground. Thirdlie, it keepeth a conſtant courſe of obedience, and bringeth the fruite of the ſeede to ripeneſſe, and ſo it goeth beyond the thornie ground.

Vſe 1. Reproofe of them, which, through the greedie deſires of corruptible and caſuall treaſures, are wholly withheld from ſeeking this one thing onely neceſſarie. A great crop of wheat

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is offered vnto them, which they refuſe, and fill their barnes and garners with chaffe and ſtubble. They may loade themſelues, and fill their houſes with ſiluer and gold, with pearles and diamonds, and all kind of pretious ſtones: and they take their backburthen, and peſter their houſes with old ruſtie yron, and droſſe, and pebbles, and other things that be heauy and cumberſome, but of no value. They haue libertie and opportunitie, they haue perſwaſion and incouragement to gather together, and ſtore vp abundance of durable riches, which can neuer periſh, nor be taken from them; and they take paines to heape vp ſnowe, and ſuch like matter, that will melt away and vaniſh in a moment.

Terrour to them that ſuffer Satan to rob them of all good 2
leſſons and inſtructions, and yet thinke that no hurt at all is done to them. If their houſes had been broken vp by men, and their money taken out of their cheſts, their neighbours ſhould heare their clamours, and the whole Country ſhould heare their outcries; but let the diuell himſelfe bereaue them of that portion which ſhould not haue been onely for liuing, but life, not for this preſent ſtate, but their euerlaſting ſtate: in this caſe they be quiet, no wrong is offered to them, they haue ſuſtained no manner of loſſe. It is ſet downe as a iudgement and curſe by the Prophet, that men ſhall *put their monie in-ti a broken bagge*: and what a feareſull caſe ſtand they in then that put the ſacred inſtructions of the bleſſed word of God into a bottomleſſe heart, that can hold nothing, but that which will peruert and hurt them? The Apoſtle giueth an earneſt caueat to the Hebrewes, admoniſhing them ſtrictly *to giue heed to the things which they heard, leſt they ſhould let them ſlippe*, and as the word ſignifieth, ſhould leake or runne out. For it were better to haue wounds in our bodies that all our blood ſhould guſh out, then to be rifted veſſels, hauing chinkes in our ſoules, that the doctrine of life ſhould ſoake away, and oaze out from vs. Hag. 1. 6. Heb. 2. 1.

Conſolation to them that haue couetous deſires after ſpiri- 3
tuall diſhes, that would ſuffer nothing that waies to paſſe from them, but inlarge their affections vnſatiablie to gather

all. It is a point of follie, indeed, as it was in the rich man, *Luk.* 12. to multiplie worldlie wealth: but these haue the Lord to commend their wisedome, and it may as truelie bee affirmed of them, as of such as be merciful, because they be the same persons, though the respects differ, That they lay vp in store, for themselues a good foundation against the time to come, that they may obtaine eternall life.

Doct. 2. An ill mans mout worketh much woe.

But the mouth of the wicked, &c.] The tongues of vngodly men are alwaies pernicious and hurtfull. Of them Saint *Iames* speaketh largely, comparing them to fire breaking out in an house, or whole towne, especially when it commeth by the hostilitie of the enemie, making assault to it; by meanes whereof men are staied from extinguishing of it, and haue not onely their goods, but their life also in great perill. And this flame of the tongue is so much more dangerous then materiall fire, Iames. 3. 5. 7. because *it is kindled of hell*, that is, the diuell himselfe hath set it on worke. And so in the same place he resembleth them to *poison*, and that not of the common sort, but *to strong poison*, which is deadly, and faileth not to worke the bane of them that drinke it.

Reas. 1. First, they are hurtfull, and bring great annoiance and mischiefe to other men, and therefore in the Scriptures are called *swords*, and *arrowes*, and *rasors*, and *mortall weapons*. Ier. 9. 8. Psalm. 52. 2. And yet such similitudes are not able fullie to expresse and set out the euill that commeth by venomous mouthes and virulent speeches. First, the tongue most commonly causeth weapons to bee drawne: all warres, all rebellions, all massacres, all quarrels, all manner of strifes are first breathed out of mens mouthes, on some part. Secondly, the hand may be held that handleth the weapon, the strokes may be warded, armour may preserue from the violence of them, or there may be refuge and couert to hide them that are pursued: but who can stay an vnruly tongue? What defence is against it? whether shall a man flie from a false accuser? what distance of place will preuent malicious calumniations? Thirdly, they which fall into the hands of most fierce and cruell enemies, which are pearced, and wounded with keenest and sharpest

ſharpeſt edge tooles haue all the hurt vpon their bodies; the extremitie of it reacheth but to take away their naturall life: but a ſlanderous tongue doth ſmite at the name, which an ingenious man would forgoe his breath to preſerue: and a peſtiferous ſeducing tongue doth peruert the ſoule, and by the poyſon thereof, are many thouſands brought to euerlaſting perdition.

Secondly, they bring deſtruction vpon themſelues, and draw 2
miſchiefe vpon their owne heads, as the Scripture teſtifieth: *The words of a wiſe man haue grace: but the lips of a foole deuoure himſelfe. The beginning of the words of his mouth is fooliſhneſſe: and the latter end of his mouth is wicked madneſſe.* Eccle.10.12 13. The truth of this ſhall be ſpoken of more at large in the eighteenth chapter, and ſeuenth verſe; vpon theſe words; *A fooles mouth is his owne deſtruction, and his lips are a ſnare for his ſoule.*

Inſtruction to bee very well aduiſed in all our ſpeeches, ſi- *Vſe* 1.
thence they are ſo important and weightie. Who would not heedefully foreſee where his arrow ſhall hit, before hee ſhoote it out of his bowe; leſt it ſhould deſtroy any perſon or other creature through negligence? who would not be very circumſpect and warie in diſcharging of a peece, leſt hee ſhould doe miſchiefe by it? And yet by theſe a man may affray, and not hurt; and hurt, and not kill; and kill, and not die himſelfe: but what arrow, what ſhot, what artillerie, what murdering peece is to bee compared to the mouth of a man that is not guided by a wiſe and watchfull foreſight? Great woe it worketh to other men; but it ſurely bringeth death it ſelfe vnto himſelfe: euery word that breaketh an other mans skinne, doth certainely breake the kall of his owne heart; and hee that doth aime at another to giue him a wound, cannot miſſe himſelfe to violate his owne life. For ſo wee learne in this booke: *Hee that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth his lips, deſtruction ſhall be to him.* Prou.13.3. It concerneth therefore euery man to be as prouident, yea more carefull to looke to that which goeth out of his lips, then to that which commeth in; to be more afraid to vtter blaſphemous, reuiling, ſlanderous and infectious ſpeeches, in regard of the ſoule; then to eate and de-

uour vnwholesome meates in regard of the body. And by this we are admonished to commit our mouthes to a better keeper then our owne wit or reason, or ciuill disposition; lest lust and Satan doe ouer-rule vs, to let in what they will, and to let out sinfull words, when, and whether, and as oft as they will. And this moued the Prophet to pray to the Lord to set a watch before his mouth, and to keepe the doore of his lips.

Confutation of them that thinke it nothing dangerous to speake whatsoeuer: words, they say, are but wind, when a man hath spoken, hee hath done, and so there is an end of that matter. Nay, when a sinfull man hath spoken sinfully, much hurt is done; and so there is but the beginning of a bad matter: for all the mischiefe followeth after. So it may be said of a cup of poyson; it is but a draught, and when a man hath swallowed it, hee hath done with it; and so there is an end: but hath it done with him? will there be no further working of it? it will continue his paine and torment vntill it haue made an end of his life.

Vers. 15. *The rich mans goods are his strong citie: and the feare of the needie is their pouertie.*

THe rich mans goods are his strong citie, &c.] That is, wealthy worldlings doe trust to their possessions when they haue great store. For he speaketh not of any safety that they haue by their goods; but which they seeme to themselues to haue; as is plainely expressed, Chap. 18. 11. They are as an high wall in his imagination: and it is sometimes the fault of good men in their infirmities, to repose too much confidence in outward things, when they abound with them; as euen *Dauid* himselfe acknowledged of himselfe; *In my prosperitie I said, I shall neuer be moued*: Psal. 30. 6. On the other side, the want of earthly substance doth fill the hearts of vnregenerate poore men with feares of famine and miserie. And Gods owne people are not alwaies free from the assaults thereof, by reason of the imperfection of their faith.

Doct. The extremitie of euerie state is dangerous, and no condi-

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tion safe without grace. Of this had *Agur* a sensible apprehension, when hee put vp that petition to the Lord, that *hee would neither giue him powertie nor riches; but foode conuenient for him*: that is, a moderate estate, without excesse on either hand: Prou.30.8. The meane estate is safest.

First, both of them bee curses from God vpon wicked persons. Of the one is testified, Psal.69.22. *Let their table be a snare before them, and their prosperitie their ruine.* Of the other, *Iob* giueth an example: *For powertie and famine, they were solitarie, fleeing into the wildernesse, which is darke, desolate, and waste:* Iob.30.3. *Reason* 1.

Secondly, both of them draw their hearts from all good meditations, thoughts, purposes, and desires, and fill them vp with fleshly cogitations. 2

Thirdly, both of them be occasions of vniust behauiour, procuring them by indirect dealing to prouide for themselues: Psal.62.10. Prou.30.9. 3

Instruction to labour for the Spirit which will protect vs from the venome and hurtfull effects, as well of the one as the other. Doth the light of God shine on our habitations? hath hee filled our houses with good things, and giuen vs an ample portion of wealth and possessions? hath hee prepared and well furnished our table, and made our cuppe to runne ouer? Then will the holy Ghost prouoke vs; *when we haue eaten and filled our selues, to blesse the Lord our God for the good plentie which hee hath giuen vs.* Hee will effectually admonish vs, that we be not hie minded, and trust in vncertaine riches; but in the liuing God, which giueth vs abundantlie all things to inioy; that wee doe good, and bee rich in good workes, and readie to distribute and communicate, laying vp for our selues store against the time to come. Are wee in neede and necessities, abridged of that fulnesse which diuers others doe as it were swimme in? This holy Spirit will sustaine our hearts, and perswade vs of our heauenly Fathers all-sufficiencie of goodnesse, and abilitie of prouidence and prouision for vs. That will teach and inable vs, *in whatsoeuer state wee are, therewith to be content; to be full and to be hungry; to abound and to haue want;* *Vse* 1. Deut.8.10. 1. Tim.6.17, 18.

to doe all things through the helpe of Christ which strengtheneth vs. Phil. 4. 12, 13.

Reproofe, first of them that too greedily labour to bee rich, hunting continually both day and night, and at all times, with heart and hand, and tongue, and all indeuour after these dangerous snares, desiring vehemently the curse of God vpon their owne soules. Secondly, of them which by idlenesse, or any other vnthriftie courses, doe cast themselues into penurie and want. When the Lord doth lay pouertie vpon his seruants for a triall or exercise, he doth support them with sundry helpes; hee moueth men to be compassionate towards them; his owne prouidence doth succour them, when men, and strength, and forecast, and all other externall meanes doe faile them. And especially they haue hope, and patience, and all inward supportance, which maketh the defect of outward things easie vnto them. But when men will draw pouerty vpon themselues as a punishment, the mercies and commiserations of men are refrained from them, that none should extend mercy vnto them in Psal. 109. 12. And their hearts being ouercome, are more ready to pursue them with feare and griefe, and discontentment, then all their necessities.

Vers. 16. *The labour of the righteous tendeth to life: but the reuenewes of the wicked to sinne.*

THe labour of the righteous tendeth to life, &c.] That is, the goods which good men vsually get by trauel, (though many times they are descended to thē by inheritance, or bestowed vpon them by gift, or by some other lawfull meanes brought to their hands:) *tendeth to life*; viz. both of soule and body in this world, and for the world to come: whereas the riches of vngodly men are alwaies abused by them, and made the occasions and meanes of vnrighteousnesse. The opposition is this: the riches of the righteous doe tend to goodnesse, and so to their life: but the wealth of the wicked doth tend to sinne, and so to their death.

Doct. Riches are either profitable or hurtfull, according to the owners

owners, and vſage of them. The proſperitie of *Abraham, Iob,* and other holy men is commended in the word of God, for the great good that they did, and receiued thereby: and the Prophets, and other holy writings doe as much condemne the opulencie, and wealth of the enemies of God; as making them to be moſt miſchieuous and miſerable. *Loe their wealth is not in their hand,* ſaith *Iob*: *therefore let the counſell of the wicked bee farre from mee.* And Saint *Iames* willeth the rich men to weepe and howle, for the miſeries that ſhould come vpon them, Iam. 5. 1. Wealth is good, or bad, as it is vſed. Iob 21. 16.

Firſt, the one ſort doe honour the Lord with their ſubſtance, beholding the hand of his prouidence, confeſſing the trueth of his promiſes, aſcribing the glorie to his name, and conſecrating themſelues, and their wealth to his will: the other make idols of their gold and ſiluer, and all their poſſeſſions: or elſe dedicate them to other idols, as pride, and luſt, and voluptuouſneſſe, &c. *Reaſon* 1.

Secondlie, the one ſort giue bread to the hungry, and drinke to the thirſtie, and clothing to the naked, and are euery way readie to relieue the neceſſitie of their poore diſtreſſed brethren: the other abuſe their power and riches to tyrannie and crueltie, oppreſſing them that are alreadie in affliction, or contemning them that are their inferiours, or withholding the goods from the needie, whom God hath made the right *owners of them*: Pro. 3. 27. or elſe feeding gluttons and drunkards, and otherwiſe ſinfull and vnthriftie perſons. 2

Thirdlie, the one haue for themſelues the prayers of poore Chriſtians, whoſe bellies haue been filled, and their loines clothed and kept warme by them: the others haue the ſighes, and teares, and grones, and ſorrowes of them that be wronged, aſcending to heauen, and making a continuall crie in the eares of the Lord againſt them. 3

Fourthly, the one ſort receiue the bleſſings of God with thankſgiuing, and ſo they are not only wholeſome vnto them, but holy alſo, *being ſanctified by the word and prayer*, 1. Tim. 4. 4. 5. The other deuoure and ſwallow vp the good creatures, like brute beaſts, led altogether by ſenſualitie. 4

5 Fiſtly, and laſtly, the one ſort haue laid vp a treaſure in heauen, and ſhall haue the full fruition of it, with greateſt glorie, at the appearance of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: and the other haue treaſured vp wrath againſt the day of wrath, when all their violence and crueltie ſhall be made manifeſt and puniſhed, and all their neglect of mercie and compaſſion ſhall bee publiſhed to their ſhame and confuſion, before the whole world.

Vſe. Inſtruction, to euery man that he doe not onely ſuruey his ſtate to ſee what he hath; but eſpecially to know what hee is: ſet him not ſo much regard the value and quantitie of his poſſeſſions, as the faithfull and fruitfull imployment of them. If the happineſſe of *Iob* had conſiſted in hauing much, hee could not but haue felt much miſerie, when ſo much wealth was conſumed to nothing: but now hee could recount with comfort, how wealthie and mightie he had formerly been, becauſe hee could truelie relate alſo, how righteous, and mercifull hee had been.

Verſ. 17. *He that regardeth inſtruction is in the way of life: but he that refuſeth correction goeth out of the way.*

HE *that regardeth inſtruction.*] That is, which yeeldeth reuerence, attention, and obedience to the miniſtrie of Gods holy word; *is in the way of life*, hee taketh the right courſe to obtaine euerlaſting ſaluation: *but hee that refuſeth correction*, which will not indure to heare his ſinnes rebuked; *goeth out of the way*, both depriueth himſelfe of eternall life, and walketh towards deſtruction.

The doctrine of this is fit to bee handled in the firſt Chapter, where it is more largely ſet downe by the holy Ghoſt.

Verſ. 18. *He that hideth hatred, is a man of deceitfull lippes; and he that vttereth ſlander is a foole.*

HAuing in the former words declared the perill of them that refuſe admonition, hee deſcribeth here the perſons that

that vſe to doe it, and they are of two ſorts: ſome are hypocrits, that pretend and make a ſhew of fauour and good liking, and yet nouriſh deadly hatred in their hearts: others are profeſſed contemners of that which is taught, but yet picking a quarrell againſt the man that deliuereth it, as though the faule were wholly in him, and iuſt occaſion were giuen to reiect all that he teacheth. But the Lord, which knoweth the ground and roote of their calumniations and cauils, imputeth them to their proper cauſe: and that is, the ſinfulneſſe and follie of thoſe malicious deſpiſers.

The Lord hath hypocriticall diſſemblers in deteſtation. The Prophet *Danid* maketh mention of ſuch: Pſalm. 28. 3. 4. *Draw mee not away with the workers of iniquitie, which ſpeake friendlie to their neighbours, when malice is in their hearts. Reward them according to their deedes, and according to the wickednesſe of their inuentions.* His earneſt prayer to God is to eſcape their hands; for they were very ſubtill, and readie to take him; and verie cruell and violent, if he ſhould come into their clouches. Their trade and occupation was to worke iniquitie, and therefore alſo their wages and hire ſhall bee deſtruction. By all which circumſtances it manifeſtly appeareth, that there is enmitie betweene God and them. *Doct.* 1: A plaine hart pleaſeth God.

Firſt, they are exceeding dangerous, becauſe they treacherouſlie intrap them that truſt them. They know their counſels and purpoſes, and haue all meanes of aduantage againſt them; whereas they would take heede of a profeſſed aduerſarie, and keepe them out of his company, and hide themſelues from him. And that made *Danid* to crie out vpon the execrable fact of *Achitophel* in conſpiring againſt him, Pſalm. 55. 12. 13. *Surelie mine enemie did not defame mee: for I could haue borne it: neither did mine aduerſarie exalt himſelfe againſt mee: for I would haue hid me from him. But it was thou, O man, euen my companion, my guide, and my familiar.* And ſo doth he find himſelfe much grieued with them that had *ſmooth tongues, as ſoft as oyle, and butter; and yet were as ſharpe and hurtfull as any ſwords.* *Reaſ.* 1.

Secondly, the iudgements of God will declare his hatred againſt ſuch perfidious *Iudaſes*, not onely in executing other 2

punishments vpon them, but euen in bringing to light the falshood and hidden malice of their wretched hearts. As it is said, that *hatred may bee couered by deceit: but the malice thereof shall be discouered in the congregation:* Prou. 26. 26. Though *Saul* made a faire shew to *Dauid*, cloking his secret mischieuous purpose
2. Sam. 18. 17. to haue him killed, by giuing his daughter to be his wife: yet now it is notified and made knowne to all nations and posterities.

Vse. Instruction, first, to auoid this cursed sinne, that bringeth the curse of God vpon the sinners. Let vs learne to bee plaine hearted towards our brethren; and if ought be amisse in them, let our lippes faithfully admonish them in loue, and not flatter them in hatred. It may bee a courtly tricke to dissemble, but not an honest part to practise it; it may bee agreeable to carnall policie, but it is altogether contrarie to Christian wisedome. Secondly, to bee warie how wee conuerse with such cunning dissemblers; and if wee cannot auoide their companie, yet suffer not your selues to be deceiued by them. It is not want of Charitie, not to giue credit vnto them, but an holy discretion; which the holy Ghost himselfe perswadeth vs to: *Hee that hateth will counterfeit with his lippes: but in heart hee laieth vp deceit. Though hee speake fauourablie, beleeue him not: for there are seauen abominations in his heart:* Prouerbs 26. 24. 25.

Doct. 2. Railers are fooles. *And he that vttereth slander,* &c.] It is a note of a sinful foole, to haue a bitter railing and slanderous tongue. Our Sauiour reckoneth this amongst many other foule sinnes, proceeding from a corrupt heart, whereby wicked men are defiled: *Out of the heart,* saith he, *come euill thoughts, murthers, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false testimonies, and slaunders:* Matth. 15. 19.

Reas. 1. First, they grieuously wrong the partie whose name they traduce: for if a *mans estimation bee of greater value then gold or siluer:* Prou. 22. 1. then a greater iniurie is offered by them which deprane him in that, than by those that shall robbe him of his goods and spoile him in his estate. Nay, many times the violence that is offered to ones person, is lesse hurtfull than to bee reproched in his name; and therefore they that shew

that

that indignitie, are compared to *hammers*, and *ſwords*, and *ſharp arrowes*: Prou.15.18.

Secondly, they take the way to poyſon the hearts of all that ſhall heare their obloquy, to alienate them from all good inſtructions, when they ſhall raiſe vp rumors, and falſe reports of ſcandalous behauiour againſt the Miniſters of the word; and by this meanes they worke a publike miſchiefe; To keepe many from euerlaſting ſaluation. 2

Thirdly, they are moſt iniurious to their owne ſoules, excluding themſelues from the priuiledge of Gods people in this life, and the bleſſed ſtate of glory in the life to come: Pſal.15.3. 3

Inſtruction. If wee deſire the credit of wiſedome, let vs vſe better meanes to obtaine it, then obtrectations and artificiall diſgracings of our brethren: for that commeth not from aboue; it is no gift of God; it is ſenſuall, carnall, and diuelliſh. Secondly, not to hearken to the reports of ſuch wicked perſons that ſeeke to defame others, and detract from their good name: they are but fooliſh and baſe pedlers that vtter ſuch infectious wares: and therefore they cannot be wiſe chapmen that trafficke with them, and receiue them at their hands. *It is the propertie of the wicked, to giue heede to falſe lips; and liers hearken to naughty tongs:* Prou.17.4. *Vſe* 1.

Conſolation for them that are moleſted and vexed vniuſtly for the Goſpels ſake, by clamorous and falſe accuſers: let them conſider what account God maketh of their malitious aduerſaries; he calleth them fooles, and derideth their practiſes; and therefore in the end it ſhall bee ſeene, that when they haue ſpet all their venome, they haue but ſhot a fooles bolt, and procured ſhame and ſorrow to themſelues.

Verſ. 19. *The ſinne ceaſeth not by the multitude of words: but he that refraineth his lips is wiſe.*

HE ſeemeth ſtill to proceed in the proſecution of the matter ſpoken of in the ſeuenteenth verſe, that men take an euil way for themſelues, which refuſe to be reproued. The words immediately going before theſe, declare how ſome reiect it, by

inward hatred and bitternesse of heart, and yet outwardly make semblance of great loue and friendshippe: others breake out into open profession of their discontentment and malice, by reproching those that would helpe them out of their sinnes: and heere commeth a third sort, which would shift off all rebukes, by denying, defending, cloking, or colouring their faults, by excusing, and extenuating matters that are charged vpon them. But all is in vaine; the sinne will not bee blowne away with breath: and therefore hee sheweth that it is a point of wisedome to giue place by silence, and to take the blame vpon them.

Doct. A fault excused, is oft times increased. Ier. 2. 35.

The sinne ceaseth not, &c.] The multiplying of words doth make a bad cause rather worse then better. So *Ieremy* telleth the impenitent people, that were very forward to cleare themselues of their sinnes whereof they were accused: *Thou saiest, because I am guiltlesse, surely his wrath shall turne from me: behold, I will enter with thee into iudgement, because thou saiest, I haue not sinned.* Their excuses were accusations; their denials were conuictions; their seeking impunitie without repentance, did hasten and augment their punishment.

Reason 1. First, when they defend or make things small trifles, which are vnlawfull to be done, they contradict the word of God and his truth, which no wit, nor art, nor eloquence shall bee able to preuaile against.

2 Secondly, when they hide their facts by deniall, or labour to supply their omissions, by assuming that to themselues which they neuer performed; the eye of the Lord doth behold their falshood, his eares doe heare how vntruly they iustifie themselues; he knoweth all their guiltinesse, and hee will make the world to know their guilefull halting. Though *Saul* failed of obedience to the will of God, yet he arrogated the praise of fulfilling it: though *Samuel* by demonstration declared his sinne; yet hee sought to make an Apology for himselfe, and to lay all the offence vpon the people: but that course tooke none effect; it did him no good for body or soule; it nothing preserued his honour or estate; he was conuicted, and censured, and sentenced, and vtterly cast off, notwithstanding all his excuses.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, their owne conſciences apprehend euerie action and word, and intent of the heart, and the mouer of their whole life: and they will not bee illuded by the fraud of the lippes; but take occaſion thereby to paſſe a more heauie ſentence vpon them. 3

Fourthly, it is a ſinne of it ſelfe to bee giuen to ouermuch talke; as hauing ſelfe liking and raſhneſſe for the rootes thereof: and therefore it cannot poſſibly be a medicine to cure other ſinnes. 4

Inſtruction, to leaue off ſpeaking to men for the mitigation of our tranſgreſſions, and to ſpeake to our own hearts for iudging, and aggrauation of them to the Lord by acknowledgement, that we may be pardoned. *Vſe* 1.

For this is the way that hath the promiſe: Prou. 28. 13. *Hee that hideth his ſins ſhall not proſper: but he that confeſſeth and forſaketh them ſhall haue mercy.*

Conſolation to them that humbly yeeld to a rebuke without replies, that their ſtate is good, though their actions were bad: they are wiſe now in reſtraining their lippes from ſpeaking of ſinne, though they were fooliſh before to commit it. 2

Verſ. 20. *The tongue of the iuſt man is as fined ſiluer; but the heart of the wicked is little worth.*

HE ſetteth forth the excellency of the ſpeech of godly men by compariſon; reſembling it to ſiluer that is purged and fined from the droſſe that was in it: becauſe a good man will be careſull of his tongue, not onely that there be no mixture or filthineſſe and leaudneſſe in his words; but alſo to auoid all ſuperfluous and idle babbling, and ſo to open his mouth with holy wiſedome. Which is contrary in the wicked; becauſe there is a contrarie fountaine in him of ſinfulneſſe and corruption, and no matter of vertue and grace, which are the ſprings of all wholeſome ſpeeches. Thus therefore ſtandeth the *Antitheſis*: the tongue of the iuſt man is as fined ſiluer; becauſe his heart is precious: but the tongue of the wicked is as droſſe; becauſe his heart is nothing worth.

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Doct. 1. Good mens wealth is in their heart, and is vttered with the lips. Mat. 13. 15.

The tongue of the iust man, &c.] The best wealth of a Christian is laid vp in his heart, and disbursed with his lips. And that is the meaning of our Sauiour when he saith, that *A good man out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things.* An euill man may haue coyne, and plate, and Iewels in his treasurie, and yet haue no treasure; and may draw mony out of his purse, and yet haue no good, and doe no good therewithall: but to haue grace in the soule, and to vtter gratious words with the tongue, is proper to a good man, and the exercise good, and the fruit of it good to himselfe and others. And albeit heere seeme to be a comparison of equall, as though the tongue were iust of the same value and worth that fined siluer is; yet it is to be vnderstood, that at least it is so pure and pretious, but indeed farre beyond it in excellency.

Reas. 1. Iames 1. 17.

First, this is one of the good and perfect gifts which is from aboue, and commeth downe from the Father of lights: whereas siluer is a terrestriall matter, euen earth it selfe digged out of the earth, and neuer did but grow in the ground.

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Secondly, this is currant in heauen, and acceptable to God himselfe; with whom gold and siluer are of small estimation.

3 Prou. 2. 3. 5.

Thirdly, such things are obtained by it, which no money can purchase; as wisedome, and grace, and the assurance of Gods eternall fauour, and all other good things that concerne both soule and body. *Ezekias*, and *Iehosaphat*, and other good Kings, could not haue preserued themselues by their purses and treasures, as they did by their praiers and holy exercises of their tongues. *Ionah* could not haue been comforted nor holpen by the greatest quantity of money, in the Whalles belly; where his prayer was very effectuall. *Peter* could not haue giuen so good an almes to the poore creeple, if he had been stored with siluer and gold, as he did by the efficacy of his words, through the name of Iesus Christ. Acts 3. 6, 7.

Vse 1.

Instruction: To shew our selues righteous, by putting away all obscenitie of speeches; *that neither filthinesse, nor couetousnes, be once named amongst vs, nor foolish talking, nor scurrill, bitter, or vncomely iesting, or any kind of rotten communication*, as the Apostle calleth it; *but onely that which is for the vse of edifying, that*

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it may miniſter grace to the hearers: Epheſ. 5.4. and 4.29.

And eſpecially let vs beware of the droſſe of diſſimulation, vntruth, and falſehoode, which beſeeme not righteous perſons. Make no report for certaintie of any thing that is vncertaine, neither make a promiſe without a ſetled purpoſe, and reſolution of performance. The faithfulneſſe of *Boaz* in this caſe was ſo prooued, and made manifeſt, that when hee had once giuen his word to *Ruth*, *Naomy* biddeth her to build vpon it and not further to trouble her ſelfe: for ſaith ſhe, *The man will not bee in reſt, vntill hee haue finiſhed the matter this ſame day:* Ruth.3.18.

Conſolation, if good men, notwithſtanding their great infirmities and corruptions, haue yet ſuch ſinceritie in ſpeaking, and ſuch fidelitie in performing that which they ſpeake: how ſhall not the righteous God (in compariſon of whom all men are liars, and who is not ſo properly called true, as truth, and al his words veritie it ſelfe) how ſhall not hee, I ſay, fulfill all his promiſes, and ſtand to his couenants that hee hath made with his people? Hee hath vndertaken for their ſaluation, their maintenance, protection, ſafetie from Satan, deliuerance from tyrants and perſecutors, and ſhall not all this be accompliſhed? is not all pure mettall that he pronounceth? *Is it not as ſiluer tried ſeuenfold in the fire?* Pſalm. 12.6. If hee ſhould faile of his word, he ſhould forget his truth; and in forgetting his truth, ſhould forgoe his nature, and conſequently ſhould forfeit his Deitie, which were an execrable thing ſo much as to conceiue. 2

But the heart of the wicked, &c.] Though ſinfull perſons make neuer ſo great a ſhew on the outſide, yet there is nothing within them worth any thing. To that purpoſe tend the words of the Apoſtle collected out of the Pſalmes: *The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wiſe to bee but vaine.* If the point had ſtood vpon mans opinion, there might eaſily haue been an error in it: but he bringeth the teſtimonie of God, vpon ſure and infallible knowledge to confirme it. And whereas ỹ Prophet nameth man indefinitely, that is, euery man vnregenerate: Pſal.94.11. hee ſingleth out the chiefe and choiſeſt of all the ſort of them, whoſe purpoſes ſeeme to bee of greateſt price, and moſt

Doct. 2. A wicked man hath his worſt ſide inward. 1.Cor.3.20.

likelie to preuaile, and ſaith that the thoughts of the wiſe men beſt qualified with art, and naturall parts, are not onely vaine, but verie vanitie, as the Pſalmiſt hath it.

Reaſons 1. Firſt, they are altogether deſtitute of the ſpirit of grace.

2. Secondly, the heart of man, without the ſpirit, is foule, and filthie, and an vncleane ſinke of all abominations.

3. Thirdlie, the ſtreames that iſſue from thence declare what the fountaine is, when all their words, and actions, and recreations, and imaginations are onely ſinfull and wicked: Hag. 2. 15. Tit. 1. 15, Gen. 6. 5.

4. Fourthly, Gods proceeding againſt them in his diſpleaſure maketh manifeſt how baſe they are: for hee knoweth how all things are to be priced. Since therfore he reiecteth and caſteth them away, it euidently appeareth that there is no goodneſſe in them. So ſaith *Ieremie*, *They ſhall call them reprobate ſiluer, becauſe the Lord hath reiected them:* Ier. 6. 30.

Vſe 1. Inſtruction, not too much to magnifie and admire them, nor too farre to depend vpon them. For better things are not certainely to be expected from them, than are in them. And therfore many times they make golden promiſes, and leaden performances, becauſe they haue but droſſie affections.

2. Conſolation, to poore Chriſtians in regard of their portion, notwithſtanding they come ſhort of the vngodly in goods and liuings. Many ſinners be ſet vp in ſtate, and much worth in outward wealth, when as they bee worſe than bankrupts in their ſoules, and wholy deſtitute of all inward ſubſtance: and contrariwiſe though the Saints haue but ſmall ſtore of external riches, yet they be of great poſſeſſions in their hearts, and flow with plentie in their inward parts.

Verſ. 21. *The lippes of the righteous doe feede many: but fooles die for want of wiſedome.*

BEfore was declared the excellencie of a good tongue, and well ſeaſoned ſpeech: and here are the effects of it commended, namely, the good that is wrought by it, the ſoules of many being edified therewith, and receiuing grace, and grow-

eth

eth for ſaluation and cõfort, as the body doth obtaine ſtrength, and nouriture, and refreſhing, by their meanes that miniſter wholeſome foode vnto it. And this is illuſtrated by the contrarie effect of wicked, and ignorant perſons, That they are ſo far from feeding others with knowledge and wiſedome, that they ſuffer themſelues to be ſtarued to death & deſtruction, through the want of it.

The lips of the righteous, &c. It is the note of a faithfull man, To vſe his knowledge and other good gifts for the benefit of his brethren. In this ſenſe the Apoſtle ſaith, that *though hee were poore, yet he made many rich*: 2. Cor. 6. 10. His meane eſtate would not permit him, to beſtow monie, or ſuch kind of gifts as wealthie men vſe to diſtribute, becauſe he had no great plentie himſelf: but that which he had moſt of, and others had moſt need of, that he moſt liberally communicated to all that would receiue it, whereſoeuer he came. *Doct.* 1. He is the beſt man that doth others moſt good.

Firſt, godly men doe prouide themſelues of theſe celeſtiall graces, and therby are made able to participate them to others. They haue a learning eare, and therfore alſo a teaching tongue: they be couetous of ſpirituall gifts, and therefore alſo liberall of them: they are great eaters, and (as we may ſay) haue an appetite to deuoure all, and therefore would haue euery man to take part with them. In earthly commodities, men are of a contrarie diſpoſition: for as they are the more greedie of getting to themſelues, ſo are they more niggardly in withholding from others: and as any one doth ſwallow vp more, the leſſe is left for the reſt of the companie: but in heauenly things it commeth to paſſe that none be ſo frank and free, as they whoſe deſires be moſt greedie of hauing: and none doe ſaue, and leaue ſo much for the vſe of their brethren, as they that take their full meale, and eate as much as poſſibly they can. To take the fruition of the graces of God, is the way to make prouiſion of them for our neighbours: and to beſtow vpon others, is the meanes to retaine and augment them to our ſelues. *Reaſ.* 1. 1

Secondly, they haue an vnderſtanding heart, and holie diſcretion to giue to euerie one ſuch a portion, as is fitteſt for the health of his ſoule: ſome are ignorant, and haue neede of inſtructi- 2

ſtruction: ſome are vnrulie, and haue neede of rebuke: ſome are weake, and haue neede to be confirmed: ſome are fearefull and feeble, and haue need of comfort, and incouragement. All theſe duties will a wiſe and righteous man exerciſe, according to the proportion, meaſure and degrees of his wiſedome, and righteouſneſſe.

3 Thirdlie, their lips wil ſend a meſſage to heauen, and deale with the Lord to relieue them, whoſe wants themſelues are not able to ſupplie. And ſo they do not onely feede the ſoules but euen the bodies of very many, when their prayers and prayſes are accepted of God, and made effectuall, for the fruitfulnes of the earth: And to that purpoſe tendeth the prayer of the Prophet, Pſalm. 67.5.6. *Let the people praiſe thee, O God: let all the people praiſe thee. Then ſhall the earth bring forth her increaſe, and God, euen our God ſhall bleſſe vs.* To the ſame effect is
Ioel 2.17.19. the exhortation that is giuen by *Ioel* for the healing of the miſeries of his time. *Let the Prieſts, the Miniſters of the Lord, weepe betweene the porch and the altar: and let them ſay, ſpare thy people, O Lord, &c. Then will the Lord anſwere, and ſay vnto his people, behold I will ſend you corne, and wine, and oyle, and you ſhall be ſatisfied therewith.* And by this meanes *Eliah* did feede all Iſrael, by procuring raine, for want whereof they were like to periſh. All *Achabs* wealth, and the riches and power of the whole kingdome were inſufficient for ſuch a worke.

Vſe 1. Reproofe of them that neuer miniſtred any thing, but infection to their people for their ſoules. No child, no ſeruant, no not the wife of their owne boſome, had euer any helpe by them to ſaluation. Their houſes be nurſeries and ſeminaries of ſwearing, and gaming, and drinking, and all kindes of ſinfulneſſe. An ignorant and vngodly familie ſo allowed, and continued, doth conuince the gouernour to be a ſinner, a foole, and a kind of murtherer of himſelfe, as the other part of the verſe ſheweth, which ſhall bee paſſed ouer now, becauſe it hath been partly handled alreadie, and muſt bee againe hereafter.

2 Secondly, inſtruction to make choice of habitation, and ſocietie with iuſt men: for much commoditie is to bee had in their companie, by the benefit of their fruitfull tongue.

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Verſ. 22. *The bleſſing of the Lord it doth make rich: and he addeth no ſorrowes with it.*

THe purpoſe and drift of theſe words is, to ſhew the preeminence that Gods people haue aboue the men of the world: that whereas the wicked haue nothing but their owne hands, and carnall meanes to truſt vnto for their eſtate; ſuch as be godly, haue God to prouide for them; and his goodneſſe onely doth make rich, and they onely are inriched by him. But becauſe his enemies haue vſually more ſtore of goods then his children; and thereby it may ſeeme, that either men may bee rich without his bleſſing, or elſe that hee is more prouident for ſinners then for Saints; therefore hee ſheweth the difference; That troubles and vexations are intermingled with the goods of the wicked, and his ſeruants are freed from them. Yet it is not ſo to be conceiued, as though no good men had any troubles with their riches; and that whoſoeuer doe find griefe and perturbations in theſe earthly things, were depriued of the bleſſing of God, and teſtimonies of his fauour: but this is the meaning, that ſo farre as he doth beſtowe them, and they depend vpon him for them, ſo farre they eſcape from vexations: ſo that the cares and troubles growe meerely from their owne infirmities.

The bleſſing, &c.] As euerlaſting life is the gift of God; ſo is a good and comfortable eſtate in this world. *Dauid* in his thankſgiuing to God, maketh a free confeſſion thereof, ſaying; *Both riches and honour come of thee*, &c. 1. Chron. 29. 12. *Doct.* A comfortable eſtate is a bleſſing of God.

Firſt, neither the commodiouſneſſe of any trade, nor skill, nor ſtrength, nor diligence can preuaile, vnleſſe hee giue ſucceſſe. And therfore the holy Ghoſt teacheth in the Pſalms; that without him, *It is in vaine for men to riſe early, and to lie downe late, and to eate the bread of ſorrow*: Pſal. 127. 2. And therefore *Moſes* giueth that ſerious admonition; *Beware leſt thou ſay in thine heart, my power, and the ſtrength of mine owne hand hath prepared me this abundance. But remember the Lord thy God: for it is hee which gineth thee power to get ſubſtance.* Deut. 17. 18. *Reaſon* 1.

2 Secondly, he alone worketh contentment, which is an high degree of richneſſe.

3 Thirdly, hee giueth a chearefull heart with the portion, and cauſeth them to take their part of their poſſeſſions with comfort: Eccleſ. 2. 24.

4 Fourthly, he preſerueth them from the feares of loſſes whiles they enioy their goods, and from immoderate ſorrow if their ſubſtance bee taken away; as that appeared in the example of *Iob*, who by his patience declared himſelfe to bee as rich when all his goods were gone, as he was at that time when he poſſeſſed them all.

Vſe 1 Inſtruction: to vſe the meanes that wee may be bleſſed, and partakers of his promiſes. And that is: firſt, by piety and religion. For ſo runneth the promiſe; *Bleſſed is the man that feareth the Lord, and delighteth greatly in his Commandements. Riches and treaſures ſhall be in his houſe:* Pſal. 112. 1. 3. Secondly, by calling vpon the name of God, and exercife of prayer for ſuch things as are needfull for vs. For, the neglect of this dutie, the Apoſtle ſheweth to be the cauſe of their want and needineſſe; Iam. 4. 2. *Ye fight, and warre, and get nothing; becauſe ye aske not.* Thirdly, by the good imployment and vſage of thoſe things which we enioy already, either to his owne ſeruices, or releiſe of his poore diſtreſſed people: *If we honor the Lord with our riches, and with the firſt fruits of all our increaſe, our barnes ſhall be filled with abundance,* &c. Chap. 3. 9, 10. And ſo, *liberall perſons are promiſed to haue plenty:* Prou. 11. 25. Fourthly, by mercy and liberalitie to them that are in neceſſity: Prou. 11. 24, 25. Fifely, by faithfulneſſe and diligence in our places and callings; as hath been ſhewed in the fourth verſe.

2 Conſolation to ſuch as ſerue him, that they ſhall ſurely bee ſtored with all ſufficiencie. Thoſe whom hee will raiſe vp to wealth, ſhall certainelie riſe, though neuer ſo many ſeeke to hold them downe: for who ſhall hold backe his hands from giuing his owne vnto his owne. How marueilouſly were *Abraham* and *Iacob* enriched among ſtrangers and infidels, not onely aliants from their religion, but vowed enemies to their nation? And where in his wiſedome hee ſeeth it not fit to fill

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their houſes with amplitude of ſubſtance, hee will make few things to yeelde manie comforts, and ſmall things to bee of great force, and meane things to bee verie precious and excellent. And in this ſenſe it is ſaid, that *A ſmall thing vnto the iuſt man, is better then great riches to the wicked and mightie:* Pſal.37.16.

Terrour for the wicked, that they can neuer be rich: though they haue riches, yet they are not rich, but onely plagued with a multitude of torments and vexations: Eccleſ.2.26. 3

Verſ. 23. *It is a paſtime to a foole to commit wickedneſſe: but wiſedome* is the delight *of a man of vnderſtanding.*

IT *is a paſtime to a foole to commit wickedneſſe*, &c.] That is, ſinfull men take great pleaſure in doing that which is euill, as if it were a ſport or recreation to them: and it is as much ioy and refreſhing to him that is godly wiſe, both to get wiſedome, and to performe all the good exerciſes thereof.

Sinne is the delight of ſinners; and grace, of good men. Of the one ſort wee haue many teſtimonies in this booke; but in the ſecond Chapter eſpecially, verſe 14. *They delight in doing euill*, and *reioyce in wicked frowardneſſe.* And in the fourth Chapter, verſe 17. it is ſaid; *that they eate the bread of wickedneſſe, and drinke the wine of violence: it is meate and drinke vnto them to doe miſchiefe.* Of the other ſort, the Prophet is an example and patterne, in the hundred and nineteenth Pſalme: where, in many places hee profeſſeth his ſingular comfort and delight that hee conceiueth in the heauenly word of God; as when hee ſaith; *How ſweete are thy promiſes vnto my mouth? yea more then honie vnto my mouth. And they are the ioy of mine heart:* Pſal. 119.103.111. *Doct.* Sinne is a paſtime to ſinners, and grace is the ioy of good men.

Firſt, this contrarietie ariſeth from the contrarie cauſes of theſe contrarie likings. All wicked men doe loue ſinne, and it is as deare vnto them as the members of their owne bodies. And all godly men doe loue righteouſneſſe, and rather deſire to be deliuered from life, then ſeparated from grace and the ſeruices of God. Now it is a perpetuall rule which neuer faileth *Reaſ.* 1.

leth that whatſoeuer any man loueth moſt, that he will alwaies moſt delight in. Secondly, wicked men are fleſhly; and therefore liue after the fleſh, and ſauour of the things of the fleſh, and delight in the works of the fleſh. And godly men are led by the Spirit, and ſauour of the things of the Spirit, and reioyce in the fruits of the Spirit.

2 Secondly, it is ſeene in the contrary effects of both ſides. Firſt, wicked men runne violently to ſinne, and will not deſiſt from their diuelliſh purpoſes, before they haue effected them: though godly men through naturall corruptions and temptations, haue ſometimes a proneneſſe and inclination to euill; yet they may be eaſily retracted by counſell and admonition; as *Dauid* was from ſlaying of *Nabal*; but they conſtantly proceede to the performance of euery good dutie. Secondly, wicked men doe meditate in the night, and indeuour in the day to fulfill their ſinfull deſires, *They worke wickedneſſe vpon their beds, and when the morning is light, they practiſe it; becauſe their hand hath power:* Micah 2.1. Godly men doe meditate in the night, and indeuour in the day to know and obey the holy will of the Lord. As *Iſaias* ſpeaketh in the perſon of all the faithfull; *With my ſoule haue I deſired thee in the night, and with my ſpirit within mee will I ſeeke thee in the morning:* Iſa. 26.6. Thirdly, when wicked men haue accompliſhed their ſinfull deſires, they ſurfet with gladneſſe: when they are diſappointed, they are filled with bitter vexation. *For they cannot ſleepe, except they haue done euill; and their ſleepe departeth, except they cauſe ſome to fall. For they eate the bread of wickedneſſe, and drinke the wine of violence:* Prou. 4.16, 17. When godly men haue committed ſinne, it bringeth anguiſh vpon their hearts; when they haue performed any Chriſtian ſeruice, it is a comfortable refreſhing to their ſoules. Fourthly, the cuſtome of ſinning is *ſo ſweete* to the wicked, *that they will not forſake it*, but take them for their enemies that ſhall diſſwade them from it: the yoke of ſinne is heauie to the godly, that they ſtill ſtriue to bee disburthened of it, and the yoke of Ieſus ſo eaſie, that they willingly yeelde themſelues to it, and account them their beſt friends, that ſhall helpe them againſt the one, and further them to the other.

Iob 20.12.

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Confutation, of the erronious oppinion of thoſe, that allowing themſelues in the purſuit of all ſinfull pleaſures, and profits, euen ſeruing their luſts with delight, and working vncleanneſſe with greedineſſe, doe yet vndertake for the ſafetie of their owne ſoules, and challenge the name, and perogatiue of righteous men. *Vſe* 1.

Conſolation, to them that are wearied with the rebellious motions of the fleſh, that are not able vtterly to ſubdue the remnants of ſinne, and their owne naturall diſpoſition, but that ſometimes their pride giueth them a wound; ſometimes their rage breaketh out ſuddainly, & ſtriketh them ſo, that the prints of the ſtrokes are ſeene, and the ſcarres which remaine after them; ſometimes couetouſnes preſſeth ſo hard vpon them, that it maketh them to giue ground, yea, it taketh, and impriſoneth them: yet if they hate theſe corruptions the more becauſe they haue been hurt by them; if they labour for liberty, and groane for deliuerance out of their captiuitie, they are ſtil reputed wiſe, and the faithfull ſouldiers, and ſeruants of Chriſt. 2

Verſ. 24. *That which the wicked feareth, ſhall come vpon him: but God will graunt the deſire of the righteous.*

THe condemnation in the world to come, which vngodlie men through the guiltineſſe of their conſciences are often ſummonned vnto, when God ſhall draw their ſoule out of their bodie, they ſhall certainly fall into. And thoſe iudgements, and miſeries of this life, which they moſt hate, though they hope to eſcape them, they are in danger to bring vpon themſelues.

And that which is moſt deſirable, and will be moſt comfortable to Chriſtians, the Lord which knoweth what is moſt acceptable to them, and profitable for them, will in due ſeaſon beſtow vpon them.

That which the wicked feareth, &c. Whatſoeuer is moſt contrarie to the affection, and liking of ſinfull perſons, that they may expect to bee plagued withall. This the Lord threatned to the rebellious and obſtinate Iewes by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, *I will take from them their power, the ioy of their honour, the pleaſure* *Doct.* 1. That which ill men moſt feare ſhall ſurely befall them.

ſure of their eies, and the deſire of their heart, their ſonnes and their daughters: Ezek.24.25. The things which they are altogether vnwilling to depart with, thoſe would he ſtrip them of: and conſequently, that which they would be very loath to beare, ſhould heauily be laid vpon them.

Reaſ. 1. Firſt, ordinarily they feare that which is the moſt proportionable, and proper puniſhment of their offences. As proud men haue nothing in ſo great deteſtation, as reproch, and contempt: and nothing is ſo much due vnto them as to be contemned.

2 Secondlie, their feare and dread of falling into thoſe euils, doth cauſe them to ſeeke the preuention of them by euill meanes, and thereby they take the way to inforce the ſpeedie execution of them. As they that would flie farre from neceſſitie and want, by haſtie getting of riches and ſubſtance, do very often prouoke pouertie to come ſwiftly with violence vpon them. For this is the way that hath the promiſe: Prou.28.13. *He that hideth his ſinnes ſhall not proſper: but he that confeſſeth, and forſaketh them, ſhall haue merie.*

3 Thirdly, the Lord doth make choice of, and ſingleth out ſuch maner of iudgements as ſhal moſt ſting them, and come neereſt to their hearts, and thoſe are they which are moſt terrible to them. What could haue been ſo grieuous to *Haman*, as firſt to be made *Mordecaies* page, and then afterwards to be hanged vpon the gallowes; then which nothing could bee inuented more horrible to him, and therfore he had prouided it for *Mordecai* whom he moſt mortally hated?

Ioel.1.5. Iſa.3.16.17. &c.

Vſe. Inſtruction, firſt to fence our ſelues againſt the imitation of the wicked, and deſire of their ſtate, by conſidering how wretched and miſerable their condition is. Euen preſentlie they are arreſted, and after a ſort apprehended with feares: hell and deſtruction doe ſometimes ſhew themſelues vnto their ſoules; and in time to come, vnleſſe they repent, they ſhall haue full poſſeſſion of them. Secondly, to free our ſelues from all our feares, by flying to the Lord for ſuccour, againſt the miſchiefes which wee would not fall into, and for repentance and humiliation againſt the ſinnes that would draw them vpon our heads.

But God will graunt, &c.] The beſt way to haue our willes ſatisfied, is to be godly. For to ſuch there is a promiſe made, that *God will fulfill the deſires of them that feare him.* Wherein yet theſe rules are to bee obſerued: First, that our will bee agreeable to Gods will, the deſire muſt bee holie, and ſeaſoned with the ſpirit; and not carnall, and corrupted by the fleſh. *Dauid* in a paſſion would needes know how long hee was to liue. And *Iames* and *Iohn* would haue fire to come from heauen to deſtroy a whole towne, and another time they made ſute to bee the ſecond men of the whole earth. Theſe petitions were not graunted, becauſe they were not aduiſedly asked, nor faſe for them to be obtained. Secondlie, that ſometimes lawfull deſires are not performed in the ſame kinde, but exchanged for better, and that which doth more good is beſtowed inſtead of them. *Moſes* deſired to enter into the land of Canaan, hee was denied that, but he entred ſooner into the heauenly and bleſſed reſt of euerlalling life. *Paul* would haue bin perfectly freed from al originall corruption, or at leaſt from the ſtirrings, and working of it, but it ſtood not with the wiſedome of God to yeeld that vnto him: but he aſſiſted him with grace againſt it, which was much more for his owne glory, and the ſound comfort of *Pauls* conſcience. Thirdly, that we tarry the Lords leaſure, and depend on his hand, to miniſter in fitteſt time, all thoſe good things which our ſoules deſire, and ſo wee ſhall not faile to receiue them, when he ſeeth that they will bee moſt expedient for vs.

Doct. 2. Good mens deſires ſhall be graunted.

Pſal. 145. 19.

First, he raiſeth vp the heart to ſeeke for them, hee enclineth the ſoule, ſo much to long after them, and therefore it was his purpoſe to beſtow them. For thereby the Prophet taketh footing for aſſurance of helpe to Gods diſtreſſed ſeruants, crying vnto him: *Lord, thou heareſt the deſire of the poore: thou preparest their heart: thou bendest thine eare to them.* Pſalme 10. 17. *Reaſon* 1.

Secondly, he giueth the ſpirit of faith, and prayer which will haue no nay: they neuer ſuſtaine any repulſe; what ſoeuer they lay hold on, they make their owne. And therefore Saint *Iohn* ſaith, that *this is the aſſurance that wee haue in God, that if we aske* 2

any thing according to his will, he heareth vs. And if we know that he heareth vs, what soeuer we aske, we know that we shall haue the petitions that we desire of him: 1.Ioh.5.14.15.

3 Thirdly, he calleth vs to him by commandement to seeke all good things at his hand, and incourageth vs to the same by promises: and therfore his owne truth is our securitie for them.

4 Fourthly, his al-sufficiencie, and absolute abilitie for performance, doth abundantly exceede all the desires of all the faithfull, yea, of all creatures, though they were neuer so ample and feruent. For hee is able to doe abundantly aboue all that wee aske or thinke, Ephes.3.20.

Vse 1. First, consolation to righteous men, against the defects that are in their soules, and the necessities of state, and bodie; they are best prouided for both: for so great is the credit which they haue in the Court of heauen, and their fauour with the King of heauen, that they aske, and haue; desire, and preuaile: and if they be not forward enough that waies, they shal be called vpon to put in their petitions, and inlarge their desires. *Aske*, saith our Sauiaur, *and ye shall receiue, that your ioy may bee full*: Ioh.16.24. *Open thy mouth wide*, saith the Lord, *and I will fill it*: Psalm.81.10.

2 Secondly, terror for their enemies, that by tyrannie and violence compell them to complaine of them. So farre as the Lord is readie to gratifie them by graunting all good things which they aske, so farre is he also prouoked to punish their aduersaries and oppressors that cause them to crie.

Vers.25. *As the whirle winde passeth, so is the wicked no more: but the righteous is an euerlasting foundation.*

THe meaning of the words is, that vngodly men, howsoeuer they flourish for a time, yet do suddainly come to ruine, and destruction; as the whirle-wind swiftlie bloweth ouer, and is lesse constant, and permanent, than the ordinarie winde is, though there bee no stabilitie in any. But when it is said, *they are no more*, he doth not intimate any mortalitie of their soules, as though they should be wholly dissolued as brute beast: for

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their ſoules are euerlaſting as well as Gods people, and their bodies ſhall be raiſed vp againe at the day of the Lord, as well as the Saints: but it is their hope and happineſſe, and not their being that periſheth, they ſhall neuer recouer any good eſtate any more. Now againſt theſe are ſet the righteous, whoſe ſoule and body, and bleſſednesſe, haue a ſetled ſafetie, as a foundation that can neuer bee remoued. So that this is the oppoſition: the wicked are as a whirle-winde, and ſo are no more: but the righteous are like a firme foundation, and ſo perpetually remaine.

Doct. Vngodly men haue faire ſhewes, but good men haue a firme foundation.

Though the ſtate of the vngodly bee more ruffling then the ſeruants of God; yet the ſtate of Gods ſeruants is more certaine and ſtable then the vngodly ones. The whirle-winde mounteth aloft, and toſſeth vp hay, and ſtraw, and ſtubble, and filleth mens eyes with duſt, and commeth violently vpon them with a bluſtering blaſt; but immediately it is gone, and paſſed farre away. The foundation lieth low in the ground, & is neither ſeene nor heard; yet there it continueth immoueable for many generations. The vnconſtant and tickle eſtate of wicked men, is fitly expreſſed by liuely compariſons in the prophecie of *Hoſea*; *They ſhall be as the morning cloud, and as the morning deaw that paſſeth away; as the chaffe that is driuen with a whirle-winde out of the floore, and as the ſmoke that goeth out of the chimney.* The contrary firmitude and ſtabilitie of the godly, is by our Sauiour himſelfe likened to an houſe that is built on a rocke: *and the raine fell, and the floods came, and the windes blew, and beate that houſe, and it fell not; for it was grounded on a rocke.* Hoſ.13.3. Matth.7.25.

Reaſon 1. Firſt, the one ſort haue been as vnconſtant in their waies, and as eaſily blowne from ſinne to ſinne, as the chaffe, and duſt, and withered leaues haue been carried vp and downe with the wind: and if they haue entred into any good courſe, there hath been no more ſtedfaſtneſſe in them, then is in the morning cloud and morning deaw: Iſay 64. 6. Hoſ. 6. 4. The other haue rooted and ſetled aſwell in faith, as in all faithfull behauiour: and for theſe cauſes the one ſide flitteth away, and is gone to miſerie; and the other remaine happy and bleſſed for euer.

2 Secondly, the one ſort haue God and his Angels to purſue and puſh them away: the other haue God and his Angels to vphold and confirme them, that they be not moued from the fruition of his fauour.

Vſe 1. Terrour for ſinfull men, whoſe ſhort and momentany proſperitie ſhall ſo ſpeedily and ſodainely be turned into miſerie.

2 Inſtruction: firſt, not to affect the pleaſures of ſinne, wherein may bee a continuall expectation of ſuddaine deſtruction. Secondly, not to repoſe affiance in any wicked perſon. For though there were ſome conſtancie in their hearts or mouthes, (which ſeldome or neuer falleth out) yet there is none in their life and eſtate. Pſal. 146. 3, 4. *Put not your truſt in man, nor in the ſonne of man: for there is no helpe in him, his breath departeth, and he returneth to his earth: then his thoughts periſh.*

3 Conſolation to ſuch as are moleſted with the boyſterous tempeſts of wicked men; though they roare loud, they ſhall not rage long; the Lord will put a ſpeedy end to their cruelsie. Which was an argument that the Prophet vſed to confirme the hearts of ſuch as were oppreſſed with violence and vexations in his time; *The meeke in the Lord ſhall receiue ioy againe; and the poore men ſhall reioyce in the holy one of Iſrael. For, the cruell man ſhall ceaſe, and the ſcornefull ſhall be conſumed, and all that haſted to iniquitie ſhall be cutoff:* Iſai. 29. 19, 20.

Verſ. 26. *As vineger is to the teeth, and ſmoke to the eyes; ſo is the ſlothfull to them that ſend him.*

Doct. We muſt be careſull whom we imploy in our affaires.

AS *vineger*, &c.] That is, too much vineger, or other things that be ſharpe and ſoure, doe ſet the teeth on edge; and ſmoke doth bring both ſmart and hurt to the eyes: ſo doth the ſlothfull perſon, or he that is giuen to any other leaud behauior, worke vexation of heart to them that ſend him, or commit matter of moment vnto him.

He that imployeth in any ſeruice vnworthy and careleſſe perſons, ſhall bring ſorrow and moleſtation vpon himſelfe.

There is another Prouerbe which tendeth to the ſame purpoſe, though the ſimilitude be different; as though hee ſhould

cut

cut off his meſſengers feet: ſo he drinketh violence or hurt, that ſendeth a meſſage by a foole: Prou.26.6. He doth as much iniurie to himſelfe, as if he ſhould maime his meſſenger of his feete, or make him lame of his legs: for as the one in that caſe, ſhould not bee able to diſpatch his iourney; ſo neither can the other well performe the things that are committed to his care and wiſedome. It is a ſpeech that is ordinary in vſe; that he muſt neuer looke to ſpeede well that ſendeth a foole on his errand.

Firſt, there is perill of falſhood and treachery, or of much remiſneſſe and negligence, or want of diſcretion, and skilfulneſſe: by all which there groweth hurt, or loſſe, or trouble to him that putteth him in truſt with his affaires; as *Mephiboſheth* and *Benhadad* found by the ſeruices of *Ziba* and *Hazael*. *Reaſ.*1.

The curſe of God doth vſually accompany the actions and waies of curſed ſinners: and therfore they that aduenture to entertain thē, haue many times a part of the puniſhment with thē. 2

Thirdly, al the faults & abſurdities in word or work, of fooliſh and ſinfūl ſeruants, are imputed to the reproche of their maſters that imploy thē; & ſo the ſorrow is cauſed by ſhame & infamie. 3

Fourthly, the contrarie will cleare the truth of this point. For if good ſeruants and faithfull meſſengers, bee for the comfort, and credit, the ſafetie and profit of ſuch as doe vſe them; then they that are altogether of another maner of affection and diſpoſition, cannot but worke another manner of effects and conſequents. 4

Admonition: to bee very heedefull to auoide that noiſome ſinne of ſlothfulneſſe, which bringeth ſo many miſchiefs with it, both to our ſelues for ſoule, and body, and ſtate, and name: and to others alſo; and thoſe eſpecially whom in ſpeciall manner we owe duty vnto. *Vſe.*1.

Secondly, to make a wiſe choice, prouidently of ſuch as wee haue occaſion to vſe in anie buſineſſe, that their induſtrie and diligence, their prudencie and diſcretion, their faithfulneſſe and ſound dealing, may bee a refreſhing, and not a torment to vs. And of the benefit that commeth by ſuch, it is ſpoken in the fiue and twentie Chapter, verſe 13. *As the coolneſſe of ſnowe water* (for that is the meaning) *in the time of* 2

harueſt:

harueſt; ſo is a faithfull meſſenger to them that ſend him; for he refreſheth the ſoule of his maſters. If we haue obtained ſuch as be not as ſmoke to offend our eyes, but our eyes may behold them and their good behauiour with delight, let vs not bee vineger to their teeth, or ſmoke to their eyes: let not our ſcoureneſſe and diſcontentment, our nigardlineſſe and ouermuch ſparing, be any meanes of their diſcouragement. Deale kindly with them, and be liberall to them, that thou maieſt not onely retaine them ſtill to bee thy ſeruants, but giue all good furtherance to the continuance of their vprightneſſe.

Verſ. 27. *The feare of the Lord increaſeth the daies: but the yeares of the wicked are cut ſhort.*

THe feare of the Lord, &c.] That is, true pietie and religion, with the exerciſe alſo of iuſtice and righteouſneſſe. *Increaſeth the daies;* That is, as a meanes it preſerueth thoſe that are indued with it, from an vntimely death. *But the yeares of the wicked ſhall be cut off.* Their vngodly and ſinfull courſe of life is ſometimes an inſtrument to bring them ſpeedily to their end; as by ſurfets and euill diſeaſes, or falling into the hands of the Magiſtrate, or by quarrelling, and ſuch like. Sometimes it prouoketh the Lord to ſtay them in the middeſt of their race, and not to ſuffer them to come to that age, which by their ſtrength & conſtitution of body they might haue attained vnto. And in this ſenſe the Prophet ſaith in the Pſalmes; that *the wicked ſhall not liue out halfe their daies.* This doctrine of this verſe hath been handled already in the eleuenth verſe of the former Chapter.

Pſal. 55. 23.

Verſ. 28. *The patient abiding of the righteous ſhall be gladneſſe: but the hope of the wicked ſhall periſh.*

AFter that the children of God haue once imbraced his promiſes, afflictions & temptations do vſually enſue thereupon, that it would ſeeme to ſenſe and fleſhly reaſon, that miſerie and troubles were the only rewards of pietie and obedience, and nothing elſe performed to them that truſt in his word. Now there-

therfore he ſheweth that a better ſtate and condition remaineth for them: that their ſorrow ſhall be turned into ioy, and their mourning into gladnes, when the Lord ſhal deliuer them from troubles, and fulfill all his promiſes. Which is illuſtrated and further amplified by the contrarie caſe of the wicked: which howſoeuer now they ſeeme to haue the preheminence, and are moſt likely to preuaile hereafter, ſhall yet be depriued of their preſent proſperitie, and fruſtrated of all future expectation. This then is the oppoſition: The hope of the righteous ſhall preuaile, and bring them gladneſſe: but the hope of the wicked ſhall periſh, and ſo worke them ſorrow.

The patient abiding, &c. They which depend on God in their afflictions, ſhall in due ſeaſon be deliuered from them. Vpon this ground an exhortation is raiſed in another place of this booke. *Let thy heart be in the feare of the Lord continuallie. For ſurely there is an end, and thy hope ſhall not be cut off:* Prou.23.17. 18. Though troubles and ſorrowes are in appearance, perpetuall and endles, yet they are but temporary, and come quickly to an end; though hope and poſſibilitie of helpe ſeeme readie continually to vaniſh away, yet it neuer ceaſeth, nor is taken away.

Doct. 1. They that in affliction wait on God, ſhall timely finde eaſe.

Firſt, there is nothing in all the world that is more infalliblie aſſured of certaine ſucceſſe, then the hope of Chriſtians. It neuer miſſeth of that which it aimeth at, nor any time diſappointeth them that poſſeſſe it, Rom.5.5. For faith doth ſupport, and the truth and fidelitie of God himſelfe is the foundation of it.

Reaſons 1.

Secondly, that which is long delaied, and much waited for is the more welcome, and acceptable, when it is performed: ſo ſaith the holy Ghoſt. *The hope that is deferred, is the fainting of the heart: but when deſire commeth, it is a tree of life.* The vertue of it cureth all the former faintings, and the delightfull taſte doth ſwallow vp all the ſorrowes. If *Iſaac* had been borne to *Abraham*, or *Iacob* to *Iſaac* the firſt yeere after they were maried, their ioy would haue been but ordinarie, whereas the long barrenneſſe made their births exceeding comfortable to them, as the benefits were memorable to poſteritie.

2 Prou.13.11.

Thirdlie, the delay doth draw out manie prayers to God,

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and maketh way to attention at the miniſtery of the word, it helpeth meditation, it leadeth to faithfull comforters, it furthereth good cõferences, it procureth all good exerciſes; & al theſe good exerciſes procure a proportionable meaſure of comfort.

Fourthly, it giueth men experience of their faith, & patience, and conſtancy, which all declare & teſtifie the ſoundnes and ſincerity of the heart, which is the root of ſound & holy comfort.

Fiftly, the longer it is before the Lord doth performe his promiſes, the larger his mercies are when he doth beſtow his bleſſings; when he prolongeth his ſeeding, he prouideth a plentifull harueſt; when hee doth not preſently giue the reward, he taketh time to tell out much, that his gifts may be the greater.

Pſa 1. Incouragement to patience: in all diſtreſſes, let vs tarrie the Lords leaſure, and wait vpon him; and he hath by word & writing, by ſeale & oath, vndertaken to deliuer vs out of them. Our Sauiour promiſeth, that in ỳ greateſt troubles, when they ſhould be moſt violently, & treacherouſly, and vnnaturally perſecuted, not onely of forraine aduerſaries, but of their domeſticall familiars, of their friends, of their kinſmen, of their brethren, of their owne parents; yet *not one haire of their heads ſhould periſh*. Their haires and heads might be cut off, and life might be taken away, but not loſt: they ſhould not be vainly beſtowed, without good effect in a holy cauſe. Onely hee admoniſheth vs, *to poſſeſſe our*
Luk. 21. 18, 19. *ſoules in patience*. If we keepe all ſound within, euery thing ſhall be ſafe both within and without. And then wee begin to loſe our aduantage, when we leaue the poſſeſſion of our ſelues, and the power of our ſoules through diſtempers.

Reproofe of them that make more haſte then good ſpeed to ſhake off their croſſes by corrupt courſes. They depriue the Lord of that honor which they ſhould yeeld to him, in waiting for his helpe; and themſelues of that comfort which hee would haue yeelded to them, together with his helpe. Their ioy will wither as corne that is cut downe before it be ripe, and become abortiue as a ſtill-borne child, whereof the mother miſcarrieth.

Doctr. 2. Ill men ſeeking to be happy. *But the hope*, &c.] Vngodly men beguile themſelues with a deceitfull expectation of happines. For the ſame point is ſhortly after repeated againe in the next chapter, verſe 7. *When a wicked*

ed man dieth, his hope perisheth. When good men enter vpon possession of their happie estate, the terme of sinners is out, & their lease determined, and growne out of date. *The deceiue themselues.*

First, the Lord knoweth their purposes, desires, and expectations, and will duely defeate them of the same: Psalm. 1. 6. *Reason* 1.

Secondly, their hope ariseth not from faith, nor is grounded on the promises of the word, but on sense and sight of present prosperitie. 2

Thirdly, they hope for things which are altogether impossible to come to passe. As first, to see the euersion and ouerthrow of Gods people. As *Micah* bringeth them in, both vaunting of their expectation, and failing of their purpose. *Many nations*, saith he to the Church, *are gathered against thee, saying, Now shall Zion be condemned, and our eie shall looke vpon Zion. But they know not the thoughts of the Lord: they vnderstand not his counsel; for he shall gather them as the sheaues in the barne:* Micah. 4. 11. 12. They hoped that the Saints should haue been crushed and destroied because of their precisenesse, and pouerty; but God had appointed themselues to be plagued, and threshed, because of their malice and wickednes. Secondly, that God should faile of his iustice and truth in executing his threatnings denounced against them. For so the wicked illude themselues: Deut. 29. 19. *I shall haue peace, though I walke after the stubbornnes of mine owne hart:* Whom the Lord therefore saith expresly, he *wil not be merciful vnto; but* his *wrath & ielousy shal smoke against them.* Thirdly, to take their fil of sinful pleasures here, and to enioy also felicity and happines in the life to come. Which is no more possible for any to obtain, then was for the voluptuous rich man: Luk. 16. 21. 3

Confutation and terrors for them that liue ignorantly, and impiously, and yet trust to die blessedly, and obtaine euerlasting life. They haue no other euidence for safetie from damnation, but their opinion that they haue a strong faith, and whatsoeuer the preachers say, they regard it not; they trust that God will be more mercifull then so, they hope to be saued as well as the best of them all. For so their comparisons run: ordinary Christians are too base for them to compare with, they must equalize themselues with the chiefe and principall. *Vse.*

Verſ.29. *The way of the Lord is ſtrength to the vpright man: but feare ſhall be to the workers of iniquitie.*

BY the way of the Lord, is meant the whole adminiſtration, both of his word, whereby he maketh his will knowne, and of his ſpirit whereby hee giueth grace, and of his prouidence, whereby he protecteth his ſeruants, and performeth all good things vnto them. By euery one of theſe meanes, doth he eſtabliſh and confirme both the hearts and ſtates of ſuch as be faithfull. But as for the wicked, howſoeuer he ſuffer them for a time to proceed in their vngodly waies without any great croſſes, yet at laſt he executeth ſuch iudgements vpon them, as the very ſight therof cauſeth them to quake and tremble. Thus ſtandeth the oppoſition; The way of the Lord is ſtrength to the vpright, for preſeruation, and therefore it worketh boldnes: but it weakneth the wicked for deſtruction, and therefore it bringeth feare.

Doct. 1. *The way of the Lord*, &c.] They that are moſt godly, are in beſt ſafetie. The point hath been handled in the firſt verſe of the former chapter, concerning wiſedomes ſeauen pillers.

Doct. 2. They that are moſt forward to ſinne are moſt terrified at the ſight of the puniſhment.

But feare, &c. They that be moſt bold and ventrous to ſinne, ſhall be moſt frighted with the puniſhments of it. In the.14. Pſalme, the Prophet deſcribing the conceits, conuerſation, and condition of irreligious miſcreants, doth bring them in at the firſt, ſaying, that *there is no God: and therefore they corrupt and do abominable workes*: but afterwards declaring the euent, he ſheweth that *there they are taken with feare*, and as the words are, *they feared with feare*, intimating the greatneſſe of their dread and terror: Pſalm.14.5. An example whereof we haue ſet downe before; namely, the foole-hardineſſe, and cowardlineſſe that was found in *Belſhazzer*, Dan.5.

Reaſon 1. Firſt, the great guiltineſſe that is in their conſciences doth diſmay their hearts, and daunt their courages.

2. Secondly, the Lord doth ſhew himſelfe terrible in his iudgements, and they find & feele that they are not able to ſtand before him. And this their ſtate doth the Prophet *Iſaias* deſcribe, Chap.33.14. *The ſinners in Zion are affraid, feare is come vpon the*

the hypocrites: who among vs ſhall dwell with the deuouring fire? who among vs ſhall dwell with the euerlaſting burning? 3

Thirdly, their fooliſh flatterie whereby they haue illuded themſelues, hath brought this miſery vpon them. For they preſumed of peace & ſafety, and ſo their deſtruction commeth ſuddenly without reſiſtance: 1. Theſ. 5. 3. And ſo it is ſaid in another place; *They ſhal be takē with feare, where no feare was:* that is, where was no ſuſpicion of feare, or likelihood of danger: Pſal. 53. 5.

Inſtruction: to preuent ſinne by fearing the iudgements that will enſue vpon it: as *Iob* did, euermore making this concluſion with his owne ſoule; that *deſtruction is certaine to the wicked, and ſtrange puniſhments to the workers of iniquitie:* Iob 31. 3. Secondly, to preuent the puniſhments after that we haue ſinned, by a holy voluntary feare and humiliation: 2. Cor. 7. 11. Thirdly, to confirme our ſelues in both theſe, by fearing and trembling at the word of the Lord. The practiſe whereof the Prophet *Habakkuk* profeſſeth in himſelfe; *When I heard, my belly trembled, my lips ſhooke at the voyce, rottennеſſe entred entred into my bones, and I trembled in my ſelfe, that I might reſt in the day of trouble: for when he cōmeth vp vnto the people he ſhall deſtroy them:* Hab. 3. 16. *Vſe 1.*

Verſ. 30. *The righteous ſhall neuer be remoued: but the wicked ſhall not dwell in the earth.*

THe *righteous ſhall neuer be remoued.* They ſhall neuer be remoued from Gods fauour; they ſhall neuer bee remoued from the conſtant graces of the Spirit in their ſoules; or hurtfully, in the way of a curſe, from an outward good eſtate; nor vnſeaſonably be cut off from the earth. Now becauſe ſome of theſe iudgements do ſeeme ſometimes to fall vpon ſome righteous perſons, who for a ſeaſon be eclipſed of grace, & ſeparated from the fruition and comfortable ſight of Gods kindneſſe, and fauour towards them; and their eſtate in appearance is wholly ruinated and ouerthrowne: therefore the word doth well beare it, agreeably to the meaning of the holy Ghoſt, to ſay; that *the righteous ſhall not be remoued for euer.* Though they ſeeme to be caſt downe for a time, yet they ſhall be reſtored againe after-

wards. The contrarie is here affirmed concerning the caſe of the wicked, who ſhall certainely fall vnleſſe they repent: they ſhall not continue in that eſtate wherein they are moſt grounded, and haue greateſt eſtabliſhment: they are ſo far from enioying eternall life in heauen, as that the vengeance of God will not permit them long to keep their owne breath, or to hold the outward poſſeſſions of the earth. The oppoſition therefore in effect is this; *The righteous ſhall neuer be remoued*, but haue an habitation for euer in heauen; but the wicked ſhall be remoued, and not ſuffered ſo much as to dwell in the earth: the ſenſe is the ſame with verſe 25.

Verſ. 31. *The mouth of the righteous will bee fruitfull in wiſedome: but the tongue of the vnrighteous ſhall be cut out.*

THis verſe agreeth altogether in ſubſtance of matter with the eleuenth; onely the compariſon is altered: for there the tongue of a good man for the conſtant ſtore of holy ſpeeches, was reſembled to a plentifull fountaine; and here, to a fruitfull tree, or fertile field: and there the wicked for leaud ſpeeches, was threatned to haue his mouth ſtopped, and here to haue his tongue cut out: that is, the iudgements of God vpon him for his vngracious and curſed ſpeakings, ſhall ſtrike him as mute and dumbe, as if the tongue were cut out of his head.

Verſ. 32. *The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable: but the mouth of the wicked ſpeaketh froward things.*

THe meaning of theſe words is, that a righteous man knoweth and regardeth what is beſt pleaſing to God for him to ſpeake, and what is moſt grateful to good men to heare, & what doth deſerue acceptation at any mans hand for faithfulnes and truth; and therefore he will vſe his lips to vtter it: but the wicked neither knoweth nor regardeth theſe things; and therefore he vomiteth out onely peruerſe ſpeeches, ſuch as tend to rebellion againſt God, the damnifying of men, and the annoyance and hurt of his owne ſelfe.

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The lips.] It is a point of godly wisedome, for a man to speake as his words may be accepted for his best aduantage. This appeareth by manifold examples of holy men in the Scriptures of God. When the Ephraimites were imbittered against *Gedeon*, and chid with him sharpely; how easily did he still them, abating their spirits with a milde and modest answere? Iudges 8.2. When *Dauid* was in a great rage, comming with a purpose to destroy *Nabal* and his whole family; how readily was *Abigails* mind instructed with vnderstanding, and her lips prouided of prudent speeches, whereby shee presently pacified his displeasure? 1.Sam.25.23,24. This skill also had *Dauid* himself to win the hearts of his people, and to hold them fast vnto him by the wisdome of his words: yea by the force and efficacy thereof, he made the heart of bloody *Saul* his cruell and implacable enemie for a time to relent. What shall we say of *Paul*, who knew what words would draw his mortall foes to turne after a sort to be his friends; his persecuters to preserue him; the Priests and Pharises to stand for the defence of the Apostle of Christ?

Doctr. He speakes wisely, whose words make most for his aduantage.

First, the word and Spirit of God doth informe his seruants in this knowledge, and giue them discretion to apply themselues to the state of the persons and season. For that which the Prophet speaketh of himself, is in some degree verified of euery other godly person, according to his place and occasions. *The Lord hath giuen me a tongue of the learned, that I should know to minister a word in time to him that is weary:* Isa.50.4.

Reas. 1.

Secondly, the vse and exercise of gracious and religious speeches doth bring a dexteritie, to iudge what is most meete to be spoken, and to deliuer the same in the aptest manner: and so (as trained souldiers) they are in a continuall readinesse, vpon due occasion, to deale with God and all sorts of people. And therefore the Colossians are exhorted by the Apostle, to the diligent and constant vse of the same; *Let your speech be gracious alwaies, and powdred with salt, that ye may know how to answer euery man:* Col.4.6.

2

Confutation of all popish praiers which are offered without any assurance of acceptance; and consequently it conuinceth all popish persons to be vnrighteous men, because they know not what-

Vse 3.

what is acceptable: for ſo much they plainely declare, when they pronounce they know not what in a ſtrange language; when they call vpon the dead, which heare them not at all; when they entertaine ſtrange aduocates to vſurpe Chriſt his office; when they aske things needleſſe; as the ſaluation of ſuch as are actually and abſolutely ſaued: when they aske things which are bootleſſe, as the deliuerance of ſuch as are irrecouerably damned. And their beſt apology for theſe things is; that if they doe no good, they will doe no harme: whereby they make profeſſion, that they are vncertaine whether their praiers bee like to pleaſe God, or otherwiſe be vaine and idle.

2 Reproofe, with terror for them whoſe mouthes ſpeake froward things, which may know that their words are gratefull to none but the diuell and damnable men, who wittingly and willingly, and ſpitefully with greedy deſire, do belch out ſuch bitter blaſphemies and other curſed ſpeeches, as may offend the maieſty of God, and grieue the hearts of his children: which they doe of purpoſe, to profeſſe that they are neither ſeruants to the one, nor members of the other; but vowed enemies of both: but doe they prouoke the Lord to wrath, and not themſelues to the confuſion of their owne faces? do they aſſault the glorious name of God, and ſtrike at him with their virulent and venomous tonges; and ſhall not he ſet vpon them, and deſtroy their ſoules and bodies with his grieuous plagues and fearefull iudgements? Euen this is a principal cauſe, together with whordome, and other ſinnes of death, that caſteth ſo many into the magiſtrates hand, and bringeth them to an ignominious end, for ſtelth, and robberies, for murthers, and moſt helliſh and abominable treaſons.

3 Conſolation to them that order their lips aright; they ſhoot not at an vncertaine marke; they may as well know how they ſhall ſpeede, as how they ſpeake, though their counſels or rebukes be not ſometimes well taken of men; yet at all times they are pleaſing to the Lord, who will alſo requite them with a glorious and bleſſed reward.

FINIS.